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AN OLD MAN'S DREAM.

BY S. U. W.

Ah, child! I watch you with the firelight's gleam
Lighting the beauties of your golden hair,
Nestling within the glories of your eyes,
And kissing tenderly your cheek so fair.

Your bright young life is stretching on before,
Whilst all my youth is in the far away;
I dream but of the time to come no more,
Whilst you have hardly ventur'd into day!

May and December are not made to wed,
Spring's sun and winter's snow can never meet,
God bless thee!—there is no more to be said—
And keep thee fair and pure for Him, my sweet.

FOR LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NULL AND VOID," "MADAM'S WARD," "THE HOUSE IN THE CLOSE," "WHITE HERRIES AND RED," "ONLY ONE LOVE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

I DON'T know how it is," grumbled the General, "but Enid looks scarcely any better than she did before this precious engagement of hers. You made me think that she would be perfectly happy if she had her own way; but I must say, Flossy, that I see no improvement."

Flossy, lying on a sofa and holding a fan over her eyes, as though to shut out the sight of her husband's bowed shoulders and venerable white head, answered languidly—

"You forget that you did only half of what you were expected to do. You would not consent to a definite engagement until she should be eighteen years old; she is eighteen now, and yet you are holding back. Suspense of such a sort is very trying to a girl."

The General, who had been standing beside her, sat down in a large-arm chair and looked vexed.

"I don't care," he said obstinately—"I am not going to have my little girl disposed of in such a hurry! She shall not be engaged to anybody just yet; and until she is twenty or twenty-one she sha'n't be married. Why, she's had no girlhood at all! She's only just out of the schoolroom now. Eighteen is nothing!"

"Waiting and uncertainty are bad for a girl's spirits," said Mrs. Vane. "You can do as you please, of course, about her engagement; but you must not expect her to look delighted over the delay."

The General put his hands on his knees and leaned forward mysteriously.

"Flossy," he said, "I don't wish to make you anxious, dear; but do you really think Hubert cares for her?"

Flossy lowered her fan; there was a touch of angry color in her face.

"What are you going to say next, General? Why should Hubert have asked Enid to marry him if he were not in love with her? He had, no doubt, plenty of opportunities of asking other people."

"Yes—yes; but Enid is very sweet and very lovely, my dear. You don't often see a more beautiful girl. I should like her to marry a man who was not attached to her."

Flossy controlled her anger and spoke in a careless tone.

"What makes you take such fancies into your head, dear?"

"Well—more than one thing. To begin with, I found Enid wandering up and down the conservatory just now, looking as pale as a ghost, with tears in her eyes. I rallied her a little, and asked her to tell me what was the matter; but she would not say. And then I asked if it had anything to do with Hubert, and whether she had heard from him lately; and, do you know, Flossy, she has had no letter from him for a fortnight! Now, in my day, although postage was dearer than it is now, we wouldn't have waited a fortnight before writing to a woman that we loved."

"Hubert is a very busy man; he has not time for the writing of love-letters," said Flossy slightly.

"He ought not to be too busy to make her happy."

"You forget too," said Mrs. Vane, "that Hubert has no private fortune. He is working harder than ever just now—toiling with all his might and main to gain a competency—not for his own, but for Enid's sake. Poor boy, he is often harassed on all sides!"

She drew a little sigh, as if she were sorrowing for him.

"I'm sure Enid does not harass him," said the General, getting up and pacing about the room in a hurry; "she is sweetness itself! And, as to money, why did he propose to her if he hadn't enough to keep her on? Of course Enid will have a nice little fortune—he needn't doubt that; but I shall tie it up pretty tightly when she marries, and settle it all upon herself. You may tell him that from me if you like, with my compliments!"

The General was excited—he was hot and breathing hard.

"He must have an income to put against it—that's all; he's not going to live on his wife's fortune."

"Poor Hubert—I don't suppose he ever thought of such a thing!" said Flossy, affecting to laugh at her husband's vehemence, but weighing every word she uttered with scrupulous care. "Indeed, if he had known that she would have money, I don't suppose he would ever have asked her to marry him. He believed her to be all but penniless."

"And what right had he to believe that?" shouted the General, looking more apoplectic than ever.

At which Flossy softly sighed, said, "My nerves, dear!" closed her eyes, and held a vinaigrette to her nose.

The General was quieted at once.

"I beg your pardon, my dear—I forgot that I must not talk so loudly in your room," he said apologetically. "But my feelings get the better of me when I think of my poor little Enid looking so white and mournful. And so Hubert's working hard for her, is he? Poor lad! Of course I shall not forget him either in my will—you can tell him so if you like—and Enid's future is assured; but he must not neglect her—mustn't let her shed tears and make those pretty blue eyes of hers dim, you know—you must tell him that."

"The General grows more and more foolish every day," said Flossy to herself, with disgust—"a garrulous old dotard!"

"I will talk to him if you like, dear; but I do not think that he means to hurt or neglect poor Enid. He is coming down to-morrow to spend Easter with us; that will please her, will it not? I have been keeping it a secret from her; I wanted to give her a surprise. It will bring the color back to her pale cheeks—will it not, you kind, sympathetic old dear!"

Flossy's white hand was laid caressingly on the General's arm. The old soldier rose to the bait. He raised it at once to his mouth, and kissed it a devoutly as ever he had saluted the hand of the Queen.

"My dear," he said, "you are always right; you are a wonderful woman—so clever, so beautiful, so good!"

Did she not shiver as she heard the words?

"I will leave it in your hands—you know how to manage every one!"

"Dear Richard," said Flossy, with a faint smile, "all that I do is for your sake only."

And with these words she dismissed him radiantly happy.

Left to her own meditations, the expression of her face changed at once, it grew stern, hard, and cold; there was an unyielding look about the lines of her features which reminded one of the fixity of a mask or a marble statue. She lay perfectly motionless for a time, her eyes fixed on the wall before her; then she put out her hand and touched a bell at her side.

Almost immediately the door opened to admit her maid—a thin upright woman with dark eyes, and curly dark hair disposed so as to hide the tell-tale wrinkles on her brow and crow's-feet at the corners of her eyes.

She wore pink bows and a smart little cap and apron of youthful style; but it would have been evident to the eye of a keen observer that she was no longer young. She closed the door behind her and came to her mistress's side.

Florence paused for a minute or two, then spoke in a voice of so harsh and metallic a quality that her husband would scarcely have recognized it as her.

"You have been neglecting your duty. You have not made any report to me for nearly a week."

"You have not asked me for one, ma'am."

"I do not expect to have to ask you. You are to come to me whenever there is anything to say."

The woman stood silent; but there was a protest in her very bearing, in the pose of her hands, the expression of her mouth and eyebrows. Flossy looked at her once then turned her head away and said in a cold voice—

"Go on."

"There is nothing of importance to tell you, ma'am."

"How do you know what is important and what is not? For instance, Miss Enid was found by the General crying in the conservatory this morning. I want to know why she cried."

The maid—whose name was Parker—sniffed significantly as she replied—

"It's not easy to tell why young ladies cry, ma'am. The wind's in the east—perhaps that has something to do with it."

"Oh, very well!" said Mrs. Vane. "If the wind is in the east, and that is all, you had better find some position in the world in which your talents will be of more use to you than they are to me. I will give you a month's pay instead of the usual notice, and you can leave Beechfield to-night."

The maid's face turned a little pale at the words.

"I'm sure I beg your pardon, ma'am," she said rather hurriedly; "I didn't mean that I had nothing to say. I—I've served you as well as I could, ma'am, ever since I came."

There was something not unlike a tear in her beady black eyes.

"Have you?" said her mistress indifferently. "Then let me hear what you have been doing the past few days. If your notes are not worth hearing"—she made a long pause, which Parker felt to be ominous, and then continued calmly—"there is a train to London to-night, and no doubt your mother will be glad to see you, character or no character."

"Oh, ma'am, you wouldn't go for to be so cruel, would you?" cried Parker the unwise, evidently on the verge of a flood of bitter tears. "Without a character, ma'am, I'm sure I couldn't get a good place; and you know my mother has only what I earn to live upon. You wouldn't turn me of at a moment's notice for——"

"You are wasting a great deal of time," said Flossy coldly. "Say what you have to say and I will be the judge as to whether you have obeyed my orders or not. Where are your notes?"

Smothering a sob, Parker drew from her pocket a little black book from which she proceeded to read aloud. But her voice was so thick, her articulation so indistinct by reason of her half-suppressed emotion, that presently, with an exclamation of impatience, Mrs. Vane turned and took the book straight out of her hands.

"You read abominably, Parker!" she said. "Where is it? Let me see. 'Sunday'—oh, yes, I know all about Sunday!—'Church, Sunday-school, church—as usual.' What's this? 'Mr. Evandale walked home with Miss E. from afternoon school.' I never heard of that! Where were you?"

"Walking behind them, ma'am."

"Could you hear anything? What do your notes say? H'm! 'They walked very slow and spoke soft—could not hear a word. At the Park gates Mr. E. took her hand and held it while he talked. Miss E. seemed to be crying. The last thing he said was, "You know you may always trust me." Then he went down the road again, and Miss E. came home. Monday.—Miss E. very pale and down-like. Indoors all morning teaching Master D. Walked up to the village with him after his dinner; went to the schools; saw Mr. E. and walked along the lane with him. Mr. E. seemed more cheerful, and made her laugh several times. The rest of the day Miss E. spent indoors. Tuesday.—Miss E. teaching Master Dick till twelve. Riding with the master till two. Lunch and needlework till four. Mr. Evandale came to call.' Why was I never told that Mr. Evandale came to call?" said Flossy, starting up a little and fixing her eyes, bright with a wrathful red gleam in their brown depths, upon the shrinking maid before her.

"I don't know ma'am. I thought you had been told."

Flossy sank back amongst her cushions, biting her lip; but she resumed her reading without further comment.

"'Stayed an hour, part of the time with Miss Enid alone, then with the master. Little Master Dick in and out most of the time. Nothing special, as far as I could tell. Wednesday.—Miss E. walked with Master Dick to the village after lessons. Went into Miss Meldreth's shop to buy sweets, but did not stay more than a few minutes. Passed the Rectory gate: Mr. E. came running after them with a book. I was near enough to see Miss E. color up beautiful at the sight of him. They did not talk much together. In the afternoon Miss E. rode over to Whitminster with the General. After tea——' Yes, I see," said Mrs. Vane, suddenly stopping short—"there is nothing more of any importance."

She lay silent for a time, with her finger between the pages of the note-book. Parker waited, trembling, not daring to speak until she was spoken to.

"Take your book," said Mrs. Vane at last, "and be careful. No, you need not go into ecstasies"—seeing from Parker's clasped hands that she was about to utter a word of gratitude. "I shall keep you no longer than you are useful to me—do you understand? Go on following Miss Vane; I want to know whom she sees, where she goes, what she does—if possible, what she talks about. Does she get letters—letters, I mean, beside those that come in the post-bag?"

"I don't know, ma'am."

"Make it your business to know, then. You can go."

Miss Vane turned away her face, so as not to see Parker's rather blundering exit.

"The woman is a fool," she said to herself contemptuously, when Parker had gone; but I think she is—so far—a faithful tool. These women who have made a muddle of their lives are admirable tools; they are always so afraid of being found out;" and Flossy smiled cynically, although at the same moment she was conscious that she shared the peculiarity of the women of whom she spoke—she also was afraid of being found out.

She had come across Parker before her marriage, when she was in Scotland.

The woman had then been detected in theft and in an intrigue with one of the grooms, and had been ignominiously dismissed from service; but Flossy had chosen to seek her out and befriend her—not from any charitable motive, but because she saw in the discarded maid a person whom it might be useful to have at beck and call.

Parker's bedridden mother was dependent upon her; and her one fear in life was that this mother should get to know her true story and be deprived of support.

Upon this fear Mrs. Vane traded skilfully; and, having installed Parker in the place of lady's-maid to herself and her husband's niece, she obtained accurate information concerning Enid's movements and actions, supplied from a source which Enid never even suspected.

Such knowledge was generally very useful to Flossy; but at present she was puzzled by certain items of news brought to her by Parker.

"What does this constant meeting with Mr. Evandale mean?" she asked herself. Then her thoughts went back to the day of Mrs. Meldreth's death—a day which she never remembered without a shudder.

She knew very well that the poor old woman had bitterly repented of her share in a deed to which her daughter Sabina and Mrs. Vane had urged her; it had been as much as Mrs. Vane and Sabina, by their united efforts, could do to make her hold her tongue.

No fear of the General's vengeance, of Sabina's disgrace, of punishment of any kind, would have ensured her silence much longer.

The old woman had said again and again that she could not bear—in her own words—"To see Miss Enid kep' out of her own."

She used to come to Flossy's boudoir and sit there crying and entreating that she might be allowed to tell the General the truth.

She did not seem to care when she was reminded that she herself would probably be punished, and that Sabina and Mrs. Vane had nothing but ruin before them if the truth were known. She had the fear of death on her soul—the fear that her sin would bring her eternal misery.

"You are a wicked, selfish woman," Flossy once said to her, with as near an approach to passion as her temperament would allow. "You think of nothing but your own salvation. Our ruin, body and soul, does not matter to you."

And indeed this was true. The terrors of the law had gotten hold of Mrs. Meldreth's conscience. The avenging sword, carried by a religion in which she believed, had pierced her heart.

She would have given everything she had in the world to be able to follow the advice given in her Prayer-book, to go to a "discreet and learned man of God's Word"—Mr. Evandale for instance—and quiet her conscience by opening her grief to him.

But both Sabina and Mrs. Vane were prepared to go almost any length before they would give her the chance of doing this.

Mrs. Vane was of course the leading spirit of the three. Where Sabina only raved and stormed, Mrs. Vane mocked and persuaded, coaxed, bribed, in turns; she gave Mrs. Meldreth as much money as she could spare, and promised more for the future; but the poor woman—at first open to persuasion—grew more and more difficult to restrain, and became at last almost imbecile from the pressure of her secret upon her mind.

Flossy had begun seriously to consider the expediency of inducing Sabina to consign her mother to a lunatic-asylum, or even to employ violent means for the shortening of her days on earth—there was nothing at which her soul would have revolted if her own prosperity could have been secured by it; but Mrs. Meldreth's natural illness and death removed all necessity for extreme measures.

Nothing indeed would have been more fortunate for Flossy and her accomplice than Mrs. Meldreth's death, had it not been for the circumstance that the dying woman had seen both Enid Vane and Mr. Evandale during her last moments.

Flossy wondered angrily why Sabina had been so foolish as to admit them.

She had heard nothing from Enid, who had kept her room for a couple of days after her return from Mrs. Meldreth's death-bed; but she was certain that something was now known to the girl which had not been known before.

Flossy had tried to question her, to reprove her even for going into the house of the sick poor; but there had been a look in the girl's eyes, a frozen defiance and horror in her face, which made Mrs. Vane shrink back aghast.

Though silent and not very demonstrative in manner, Enid had hitherto never shown any dislike to Flossy, and had been scrupulously attentive to her wishes as if she were still a child; but these days of passive obedience were past.

Enid now quietly did what she choose. She seldom spoke to Florence at all; and on several occasions she had maintained her own purpose and choice with a calmness and steadfastness which had almost terrified Mrs. Vane.

Who would have thought that Enid had a character?

The girl had emancipated herself from all control, without words, without open rebellion; she had looked Flossy straight in the face once or twice, and Flossy had been compelled to yield.

Yes, Enid knew something—she was sure of that; how much she could not tell. She had never questioned Sabina Meldreth in person about the scene at her mother's death-bed—on principle, Flossy spared herself all painful and exciting interviews; but she had had a few lines from Sabina—sent to Beechfield Hall on the day of her mother's funeral.

"Miss Vane knows something—I don't know how much," Sabina had written. "The parson wants to know, but couldn't get to hear. Maybe Miss Vane has told him. If she has, the parish won't hold you nor me."

"Abominably brusque and rude!" Flossy said to herself, as she drew the scrap of paper from its hiding place.

"But one cannot mould clay without soiling one's fingers, I suppose. It is months since Mrs. Meldreth died; and evidently Enid knows less than I supposed, or has made up her mind to keep the secret. But what do these meetings with Mr. Evandale mean? Is she confiding her troubles to him then? The little fool! I must see Sabina Meldreth, and Hubert too. What a good thing I had written to him to come—though not for the sake of pleasing Miss Enid, as the General fondly supposes! I must send for Sabina."

But the wish seemed to have brought about its own fulfilment.

At that very moment Parker knocked at the mistress' door.

"Will you see Miss Meldreth, ma'am? She says she would like a few words with you, if you can see her. She's downstairs.

"Bring Sabina Meldreth to me," said Mrs. Vane.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FLOSSY'S first instinctive desire was to rise from her sofa and receive Sabina Meldreth standing—not all by way of politeness, but as an intimation that the interview was not intended to be a long one. On second thoughts, she lay still.

A show of languor and indifference was more likely to produce an impression on Sabina than excitement.

Mrs. Vane closed her heavy white eyelids, and did not raise them until the fair-haired girl in black whom Hubert had noticed with the singers on New Year's Eve was standing beside her couch.

"I thought you was asleep," said Miss Meldreth, with a slightly insolent air. "Some people can sleep through almost anything."

"All the better for them," answered Mrs. Vane drily. "Why have you come?" She was not going to admit that she had been longing to see her visitor.

"I've come for the usual thing," said Sabina doggedly—"I want some money."

"You had some last month."

"Yes, and had to write three times for it—and me bothered about my rent. You're not carrying on business on fair terms, Mrs. Vane. I want to have a clear understanding. Mother managed all the money-matters before; but she's gone now, and I should like something definite."

"What do you mean by 'definite'?"

"Either money down or regular quarterly payments, ma'am. You owe me that when you think of all I've done for you."

"Have I done nothing for you, then," said Flossy, with a red gleam in her brown eyes, "in saving you from disgrace, ridding you of a permanent burden, pensioning your mother till her death, and giving you money whenever you have asked for it. Is that nothing at all, Sabina Meldreth?"

"It's something, of course," said Sabina, stolidly; "but it ain't enough. I want fifty pounds a quarter, paid regular. If you give me that, I'm thinking of going back to Whitminster, where there won't be so many people poking and prying about and asking questions."

Going back to Whitminster! That would be worth paying for indeed! But Flossy showed no sign of gratification.

"What people have been asking questions?"

"The parson, for one."

"And who else?"

"Well," said Sabina, rather reluctantly, "I won't say that there's any one else. But the parson has been at me more than once, and he keeps his eyes upon me and preaches at me in church—and I won't stand it!"

"Why do you go to church?" said Mrs. Vane, with a faint sneer.

"Because, if I don't, people would say I wasn't respectable," snapped Miss Meldreth; "and it's no good flying in their faces in that way."

"Oh! Then you wish to be thought respectable?"

"Yes, I do; and, what's more, so do you, Mrs. Vane, in your way. You're too high and mighty, and pretend to be too ill to have to go to church; but, if you was me, and heard what folks say of them that stop away, you'd go yourself."

"Possibly," said Flossy; "we are in different circumstances. Now tell me—why has Mr. Evandale questioned you?"

"Because what he heard when mother lay dying, of course. I wrote and warned you at the time."

"You should have said more then. You should have come and told me the whole story. Tell it me now."

It was a proof of Flossy's curious power over certain natures that Sabina Meldreth, wild and undisciplined as she was, seldom thought of resisting her will when in her very presence.

She sat down on a chair that Mrs. Vane pointed out to her, and recounted, in rapid and not ill-chosen words, what had passed in her mother's room in the presence of the Rector and of Enid Vane.

Flossy listened silently, tapping her lips from time to time with her fan.

When the story was ended, she turned on her visitor with a terrible flash of her usually sleepy eyes.

"You fool," she said, without however raising her voice—"you fool! You have known this all these months, and have never made your way to me to tell it! How was I to know that the matter was so important? How was I to suspect? I guessed something, of course, but not this! Why, Sabina Meldreth, we are at the mercy of that girl's discretion! She has us in her hands—she can crush us when she pleases! Heavens and earth—and to think that I did not know!"

"You might have known," said Sabina sullenly. "I've been to the house more than once. I've written and said that I wanted to see you. I don't think that it's me that's been the fool."

But the last sentence was uttered almost in a whisper.

"No, I have been careless—I have been to blame!" said Flossy, a feverish spot of color showing itself in her white cheeks. "So she knows—she knows! That is why she looks at me so strangely; that is why she avoids me and will hardly speak to me. I understand her now."

"Maybe," said Sabina, "she thought mother was raving, or didn't understand her aright."

"No, no; she understood—she believes it. But why has she kept silence? She hates me, and she might have ruined me—she might have secured Beechfield for herself by this time! What a little idiot she must be!"

Mrs. Vane was thinking aloud rather than addressing Sabina; but that young woman generally had an answer ready, and was not disposed to be ignored.

"Miss Van's fond of her uncle," she said drily, "and did not want perhaps to vex him. Besides"—here her voice dropped suddenly—"they tell me she's fond of the child."

Flossy did not seem to hear; she was revolving other matters in her mind.

"Do you think," she said presently, "that Miss Enid has told the Rector? She has seen a good deal of him lately."

"No, I don't; I should have heard of it before now if she had," replied Sabina bluntly. "He don't mince matters; and he's got it into his head that I ought to be reformed, and that I've something on my mind. That's why I want to go to Whitminster."

"Go farther away than Whitminster," said Mrs. Vane suddenly; "go to London and I'll give you the money you ask—two hundred pounds a year."

"Will you? Well, I'm not ill-disposed to go to London. One could live there very comfortable, I dare say, on two hundred a year. But how am I to know if you will pay it? Give me a bit of writing——"

"Not a word—not a line! You need not be afraid. I'll keep my promise if I have to sell my jewels to do it; and the General does not ask me what I do with my allowance. By-and-by, Sabina, I may have an income of my own; and then—then it shall be better for you as well as for me."

"When the General's dead, you mean? Well, that's as it may be. But I can't wait for that, you know, ma'am. He's strong and well, and he may live for twenty years to come. I want my affairs settled now."

"Very well. Go to London, send me your address, and you shall have the fifty pounds as soon as you are settled there."

"That won't quite do, Mrs. Vane. I want something down for travelling and removing expenses. I have some bills to settle before I can leave the village."

"You must be terribly extravagant!" said Flossy bitterly. "I gave you thirty pounds at Christmas. Will ten pounds do?"

"Twenty pounds would be better."

"I haven't twenty. I do not know where to get them. You must be content with ten."

"Ten won't do," said Sabina obstinately.

Mrs. Vane made a gesture of impatience.

"Reach me that jewel-box over there," she said. "Yes; bring it close—I have the key. Here are two five-pound notes. And here—take this ring, this bracelet—they are worth far more than ten pounds—get what you can for them."

"I'd rather have the money," said Sabina; "but, if I must put up with this, I must. I'll be off in a couple of days."

"You had better not tell any one beforehand that you are going. Some people might—think it their duty to interfere."

"All right—I'll keep quiet, don't you fear, ma'am! Well, then, that's settled. If I go to London, you'll send me the fifty pound a quarter? And it must be regular, if you please—else I'll have to come down here after it."

"You'll not have to do that," said Mrs. Vane coldly.

"Very well. Then I'll say good-bye to you, ma'am. Hope you'll get safely through your troubles; but it seems to me that you are in an uncommon risky position."

"And, if I am," said Flossy, with sudden anger, "who's fault is it but yours?"

Sabina shrugged her shoulders and did not think it worth while to reply. She walked to the door, and let herself out without another look or word.

She knew her way about Beechfield Hall perfectly well; and it was perhaps of set purpose that she turned down a passage that led past the nursery door.

The door was open, and Master Dick was drawing a horse-and-cart up and down the smooth boards of the corridor. It was his favorite playing place on a summer evening. He stopped short when he saw Sabina, and looked at her with an observant eye.

"This isn't your way, you know," he said, facing her gravely. "This passage leads to my room and Enid's room, not to the kitchens; and you belong to the kitchens, don't you?"

Sabina stopped and eyed him strangely. She looked at his delicate, sharp-featured little face, at his fair hair and blue eyes, at the dainty neatness of his apparel and the costly toy which he held in his hands.

Her own bold face softened as she looked. She half knelt down and held out her arms.

"Will you kiss me once, dearie, before I go away?"

Dick looked at her wonderingly. Then he came and put his little arms around her neck and kissed her once, twice, thrice.

"Don't cry," he said; "I didn't know you were so nice and kind. But, you see, I've only seen you in the shop."

"You won't see me in the shop any more. I'm going away," said Sabina, utterly forgetful of her promise to Mrs. Vane.

"Are you?" said Dick. "Oh, then won't there be any more sweeties in your window? Are will some one else sell them?"

"Some one else, I expect. That's all the

children care for!" cried Sabina, springing to her feet. "He's got no heart!"

Turning her face suddenly, she saw that there had been a spectator of the little scene—a spectator at the sight of whom Sabina Meldreth turned deadly white. Miss Vane stood at the nursery door. She had been sitting there, and had heard Sabina's words and poor little Dick's innocent reply.

"You are wrong," she said gravely, with her eyes intent on Sabina's pale distorted face. "He has a heart—he is very kind and gentle. But you cannot expect him to love you when he does not know you. If ever he knew you better, he would—perhaps—love you more."

This speech, uttered quite gently and even pitifully, had a curious effect upon Sabina. She burst into tears, and turned away, hiding her face and sobbing as she went.

Enid stood for a moment in the doorway, holding the doorpost by one hand, and sadly watching the retreating figure until it disappeared.

Then Dick pulled at her dress.

"Cousin Enid, why does that woman cry? And why did she want to kiss me? Was she angry, or sorry, or what?"

"Sorry, I think, dear," said Enid, as she went back to her seat.

She drew Dick upon her knee and caressed him tenderly for a few moments; but Dick felt, to his surprise, that the kisses she bestowed on him were mingled with tears.

"Cousin Enid, why do you cry too?"

But all she answered was—

"Oh, Dick, Dick—poor little Dick—I hope you will never—never know!" Which little Dick could not understand.

* * * * * *

Hubert Lepel arrived the following day. He had not been to Beechfield Hall for some weeks, and he seemed to feel it incumbent upon him to make up to Enid for his long absence by presents and compliments; for he had brought her a beautiful bracelet, and was unusually profuse in his expressions of regard and admiration. And yet Enid seemed scarcely so pleased as a young girl in similar circumstances ought to have seemed. Indeed she shrank a little from private conversation with him, and looked harassed and much troubled.

It was perhaps in consequence of this fact that three days after his arrival Hubert sought a private interview with his sister.

Flossy had meanwhile not spoken a word; she had been waiting and watching for these three days.

"Florence, I am inclined to think that you were mistaken."

"So am I," thought Flossy to herself; but aloud she only asked, "Why, dear?" with perfect tranquility.

"About Enid. I—I am beginning to think that she does not very much care."

He said the last words slowly, with his eyes on the tip of his boot.

"I am sure you are mistaken," said Flossy quietly. "But she is not demonstrative, and—well, I may as well say it to you—she has taken some idea into her head—something about me—about the past——"

She faltered skilfully; but she kept her eyes on Hubert's face, and saw that it wore a guilty look.

"Well, Flossy, you are right," he said. "She has heard something—village talk, I suppose—and I cannot get her to tell me what it is."

"She means perhaps to tell someone else?" said Mrs. Vane, with bitterness.

"No, I believe not. She has no wish to harm you, poor child, although she thinks that the General ought not to be deceived. However I persuaded her to abandon that idea, showing her that it was not her duty to tell a thing that would so utterly destroy his happiness." Florence turned away her head.

"I felt myself a villian," Hubert continued gravely, "in counselling her to stifle her conscientious scruples, Florence; but, for your sake and your husband's sake, I pleaded with her, and prevailed on her to keep silent—she will tell no one but myself after our marriage."

"You had better not let her open the subject with you at all. It will only be productive of unhappiness."

Flossy discerned the entanglement at once—she saw that Hubert meant one thing and Enid another; but out of their cross purposes she divined a way of keeping the girl silent.

"For my sake, Hubert, don't discuss my terrible past between you. What good would it do? Promise me that, when you are married, you will not let her speak of it—even to you." She shed a tear as she spoke.

"Poor Flossy," said Hubert, laying his hand on her arm. "Don't grieve, dear! I have no right to say anything, have I? Yes, I promise you I will not let her say a word about the matter, either now or afterwards, if I can help it, and certainly to no one beside myself."

And with this promise Flossy feigned contentment. But, when Hubert had left her, she paced up and down the room with cheeks that flamed with excitement and eyes that glowed with the dull red glare of rage.

"What was I thinking about to bring this engagement to pass!" she said to herself. "Yet, after all, it is better so. Hubert has a reason for silencing her; with any other man, she would have the matter out in a trice, and ruin me. Now what is the next move? To delay the marriage, of course. I will come round prettily to the General's view, and uphold him in his determination not to allow the marriage for at least two years. So Enid says she will not betray me before she is married, does she? Then she will never have the chance; for a great deal may happen—to a delicate girl like Enid Vane—in two long years."

CHAPTER XXV.

HUBERT had been worried and overworked of late; it had appeared to him a good thing that he should spend a few of the spring days at Beechfield, and try to recover in the society of his sister and his betrothed the serenity that he had lost.

But this seemed after all no easy thing to do. He was annoyed to find himself irritated by small matters; his equanimity, usually perfect, was soon ruffled; and, although he did not always show any outward sign of vexation, he felt that his temper was not quite under his own control. And it was Enid, curiously enough, who irritated him most.

"Who is this new singer," she asked one day, "about whom people are talking so much?"

"My dear Enid, how am I to know which singer you mean?" he said, letting the newspaper drop from his hand and clasping his hands leisurely behind his head. "There are so many new singers!"

They had been having tea under the beech-tree, and, as usual, had been left alone to do their love-making undisturbed. Their love-making had been of a very undemonstrative character. Enid sat in one comfortable basket-chair, Hubert in another, at a yard's distance.

Their conversation went on in fragments, interspersed by long pauses filled up by an orchestra of birds in the branches overhead.

"I do not remember her name exactly," said Enid, "The Tollemaches were talking about her yesterday; they heard her in town last week. 'Cynthia' something—'Cynthia,' I remember that, because it is such an uncommon name."

"I suppose you mean Miss Cynthia West," said Hubert, after a very long pause.

"Yes, 'Cynthia West'—that was the name. Have you heard her?"

"Yes."

"And do you think her very wonderful?"

"She is a remarkably fine singer."

"Oh, I hope we shall hear her when we next go up to London! Aunt Leo wants me to stay with her."

"That will be very nice!" said Hubert, bestirring himself a little. "Then you will hear all the novelties. But I would not go just yet if I were you. London has not begun to wake up again after its winter sleep."

"What a horrible place it must be!" said Enid, with a little shiver.

"You think so? It is my home."

There was an accent in his voice which impressed Enid painfully. She clasped her hands rather tightly together in her lap, and said, after another pause, in a lower tone—

"I dare say I should grow fond of it if I lived there."

"As you will do, in time," said Hubert, with a smile. "You must try to believe that you will soon be as absorbed in town-life as every other woman; that concerts and theatres and balls will make up for green fields and the songs of birds; that men are more interesting than brooks and flowers; that to shop and to gossip are livelier occupations than visiting the poor and teaching little Dick. Don't you think you can imagine it?"

She shook her head.

"I can't imagine it; but, if I had to do it, I would try. I don't think your picture is very attractive, if I may say so, Hubert."

"Don't you, dear? Why not?"

"It sounds so unreal. Do women pass their lives in that frivolous, vapid way?"

"Not all of them, of course. There are women who have work to do," said Hubert, looking idly into the distance, as if he were thinking of some one or something that he could not see.

"Oh, yes, I know—working women—professional women—women," said Enid, with an innocent smile, "like Cynthia West."

Hubert gave a slight start; then, to cover it, he changed his position, bringing his arms down and crossing them on his breast.

"You might tell me what she is like," continued Enid, with more playfulness of manner than she generally showed. "You tell me so little about London people! Is she handsome?"

"Yes, very."

"Dark or fair?"

"Very dark."

"Is she an Englishwoman?" pursued Enid.

"I am sure I don't know. I never asked."

"You know her then?"

"What makes you ask all these questions?" said Hubert, as if he had not heard the last. "Who has put Miss West into your head in this way?" He looked annoyed.

Enid at once put out a caressing hand.

"I did not mean to be too inquisitive, Hubert dear. But the Tollemaches are very musical, and they are talking a great deal about her. They say they saw you at the concert when she came out—some Italian teacher's semi-private concert—and they seem to think that you knew the whole set of people who were there."

Mentally Hubert made some uncharitable remark on the future destiny of the Tollemaches; but he controlled himself so far as to answer coolly—

"I know several of that set, certainly. I know Miss West a little."

"How delightful!" cried Enid. "I should like to meet some of these great artists. Will you ever be able to introduce me to her, do you think, Hubert?"

"I think not," said Hubert, knitting his brows. He did not find himself able to turn the subject quite as easily as he could have wished.

"Oh, isn't she nice?" hazarded Enid, doubtfully. "I always fancied that the people who sing and act in public can't be quite as nice as the people who stay in their own home-circle. I know that you will think me very narrow-minded for saying so, but I can't help it."

"I am afraid that I do think it rather narrow-minded," said Hubert quietly, but with a dangerous lighting in his eyes. "You must surely know that some of these singers are as good, as noble, as womanly as any of your sheltered young ladies in their home-circles who have not genius enough to make themselves talked of by the world!"

"Oh, yes, I suppose so!" said Enid, quite unconscious of the storm that she was exciting in Hubert's breast. "But it is difficult to understand why they prefer a public life to a private one. Do you think they really like appearing on the stage?"

"I am sure they do," said Hubert, with a short laugh. "You cannot understand it as yet, I suppose; you will undertand it by-and-by. It would be a very poor look-out for a novelist and playwright like myself, Enid, if every one thought as you do."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CURE FOR INEBRIETY.—A recent lecture at Toronto, gives the four principal conditions that should be observed for the treatment of inebriates to be successful. The first is abstinence; this must be absolute, and on no plea whatever, of fashion, of physic, or religion, ought the smallest quantity of intoxicant to be put to the lips of an alcoholic slave. The second consideration is to ascertain the predisposing and exciting causes of inebriety, and to endeavour to remove those causes, which may lie in some remote or deep-seated ailment. The third condition is to restore the physical and mental tone, and the fourth condition is employment; let the mind of the patient be kept occupied by attention to regular work, and the task of reformation will be shorn of half its difficulty.

THERE is no occasion to trample upon the meanest reptile, nor to sneak to the greatest prince. Insolence and baseness are equally unmanly.

Bric-a-Brac.

ONE OR THE OTHER.—In Turkestan, in Asia, every wedding engagement begins with the payment of a substantial consideration to the girl's parents. If the girl jilts her lover the engagement gift has to be returned, unless the parents have another daughter to give as a substitute. The plan is said to work well, and results in few divorces.

THE TOOTHACHE—There is little wonder that amongst the vulgar and superstitious, all manner of charms have been in vogue to release the victim of this painful disorder from its thraldom. Æsculapius is credited with the honor of being the first to advocate the practical cure of having the tooth pulled out; but this severe method soon denudes a mouth of its most useful ornaments. Gypsies are or were accustomed to apply a poultice of finely scraped horse-radish to the wrist as a cure for the torture; on the right wrist, if the tooth were on the left side of the face, and *vice versa*. We have also heard of mustard plasters on the elbow, tape fastened tightly round the thumb, and a roasted onion on the big toe. These remedies, ridiculous as they appear, may have had the effect of diverting the nerve affection to another part the body.

CURIOUS TITLES OF BOOKS.—In almost all ages and countries there has been a disposition among certain authors to choose affected and grotesque titles for their books. The Jewish and early Oriental writers were much addicted to allegorical titles. "The Bones of Joseph" is an introduction to the Talmud; while "The Garden of Nuts" and "The Golden Apples" are theological treatises. Theological writers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have adopted very odd and fanciful titles for their books. The following are samples selected at random: "Matches Lighted at the Divine Fire;" "The Gun of Penitence;" "The Bank of Faith;" "The Sixpennyworth of the Divine Spirit." One book bore this elaborately wire drawn title, "Some fine Biscuits Baked in the Oven of Charity, Carefully Conserved for Chickens of the Covenant."

THE PEASANT AND THE HORSE.—Have you ever heard a ventriloquist? You know he has the knack of making his voice come from all sorts of places. A gentleman who possessed this gift was once travelling in Russia, and turned it to very good account. He noticed that the driver of the post cart was cruel to his horse. Knowing that Russian peasants are mostly ignorant and superstitious, he resolved to punish this driver in a way that would impress him. The next time the cart stopped the driver began to yell at the poor beast most abusively, when, lo and behold! the animal seemed to open its mouth and accuse the man of cheating it of its corn, and of beating it to make it go of a speed above its strength! The effect of the ventriloquist's trick was miraculous. The driver went down on his knees before the horse, begged its pardon, and promised to treat it better in future.

OLD MARRIAGE SUPERSTITIONS.—Under the old belief that matches were decreed in heaven, the young people, especially the girls, improvised many devices for discovering their true loves and of testing their fidelity, and these devices were relied on confidently. They were too numerous for mention in this connection and we can only give a specimen or two. Two sprigs of live-forever, representing the parties, were cut from the garden and stuck in a crack of the cabin, inside; if they turned up and grew harmoniously it was a match; if differently, the mate had not been guessed; but if the experiment hit it was soon made known and the wedding generally followed. A small round hole was made exactly at the centre of two cross-roads and eight or ten inches in depth. Then he or she put one ear close on top of the hole and listened half an hour or more. If the true love were walking on either of the four ends his or her steps were heard, though miles away, and at the same time it was determined on which road the steps were made.

"LAURA" said the young lady's mother not unkindly. "It seems to me that you had the gas turned rather low last evening." "It was solely for economy, mamma," the maiden answered. "There is no use trying to beat the gas company, my daughter. I have noticed that the shutting off of the gas is always followed by a corresponding increase of pressure." "Well, that lessens the waist, doesn't it mamma, dear?" replied the artless girl. And her fond parent could find no more to say.

A SUMMER MEMORY.

BY F. F.

The leaves that danced in the summer glory
  In crisp brown clusters around us lie;
No more they whisper the sweet old story,
  That thrilled our hearts in the days gone by.
I was a king when we stood together
  Beneath their shadow of tender green;
My sceptre, dear, was a sprig of heather,
  The hills my kingdom, and you my queen!

Where first we plighted our vows, we linger;
  But love lies bleeding, and hope is dead;
The ring of another gleams on your finger:
  Your pallid cheek and your drooping head
Alone betrayeth the tearless sorrow,
  That well accords with the autumn's gloom:
And we must mourn on the cheerless morrow
  The Love that laughed 'mid the summer's bloom.

REJECTED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THEO gazes round in utter bewilderment. To-morrow evening Philip Leveson is coming here—to this house!

Slowly, mechanically she walks back to the window, and continues her monotonous tattoo upon the panes.

He refuses to marry her, to have anything to say to her!

Still, before he can give his answer once for all, he is to see her, to make her acquaintance.

And she—Theo Dudley—is to stand quietly by, in abject submission, with lowered eyes and clasped hands, whilst he looks at her, and inspects her precisely in the same manner as Billy Atkins, their bailiff, surveys the pigs and sheep which he is about to purchase at the annual fair.

Theo laughs a strange hard laugh. It is ridiculous, absurd!

Who can imagine even for one moment that she will place herself in such a position—that she will allow herself to be rejected by a man whom the fates have placed so unpropitiously in her path? No—it is impossible!

Sooner than submit to such an indignity she will immediately give up the chance of her share in the fortune—she will say "No" at once; and, if the worst comes to the worst, she will go out charing—anything rather than submit to such an alternative.

"Well, Theo?"

Her uncle's voice grates jauntily, tantalizingly upon her ear, and she cannot help wondering why there is such a jubilant and expectant look upon his face.

She turns away with a gesture of impatience.

"You quite approve of my arrangements, I trust—you will dine with us to-morrow evening?" persists the old man.

"Yes, I quite approve of your arrangements—the sooner the whole thing is done with the better; but, as to dining with you, I decline the honor. Five minutes after dinner will be quite long enough for me to make this creature's acquaintance," answers Miss Dudley, with an ominous glitter in her gray eyes.

"Five minutes," echoes her uncle, laughing. "You do not give him very long to decide upon such a weighty question—ten thousand a year and a wife—poverty and no wife!"

"At any rate it will be quite long enough. Perhaps you will kindly remind him that he is not the only person who is concerned in the matter."

"Eh—how is that?"

"Only that I shall be the first in the field, and"—holding up her head disdainfully—"shall refuse him!"

All the next day Theo remains perfectly obdurate, absolutely refusing to take her usual place at the head of her uncle's dinner-table; and now, as the gong booms forth its summons in vain, she sits comfortably ensconced in a large chintz-covered chair before her bed-room fire, absorbed in the thrilling contents of a three-volume novel.

She knows that she must see Philip Leveson, though she is by no means elated at the thought of an interview with a man who has refused to marry her; but fortunately the will has not decreed that she should sit through seven or eight courses with him, so she stoutly refuses to dine with Philip Leveson and her uncle.

"No, Marquis—we are not going down to dinner to-night," she says, as a fine St. Bernard, which is lying stretched full-length at her feet, suddenly rouses himself at the sound of the gong and thrusts a cold nose confidingly into his mistress's hand. "We are going to stay up here cosily together. By-the-bye, Langton"—turning to the dignified-looking maid who is just leaving the room—"if you see cook, will you tell her to be sure and save the grouse-bones for Marquis; he is so afraid of missing them?"

"I daresay he is, Miss Theo. Why, it was only last week he stole a whole partridge off the breakfast-table!"

"Marquis, you bad dog! Uncle Robert might well threaten to pack you off to Chandos Court if I did not come back to take you in hand soon! Dear me"—clasping her hands before her—"I little thought then how soon I was to come back! A week ago last night how different it all seemed!"

A faint sigh escapes her lips as she gazes drearily into the flames, which suddenly leap up blurred and indistinct before her eyes.

In that moment she realizes with a sharp pang the many changes which have taken place since that visit to Chandos Court.

Only a week since Rob Roy was alive, munching away contentedly at his chopped hay and oats in one of the wide straw-littered loose-boxes of the old Court, quite unconscious of the terrible fate awaiting him on the following morning; and she was Colonel Leveson's godchild, and heiress to one of the largest estates in Blankshire!

The girl leans back in her chair and sighs again, this time at the recollection of a pair of blue eyes and a handsome dark face, neither of which belong to the indefatigable but unsuccessful Jack Greville.

"I have brought the Marquis's bones, Miss Theo."

Theo looks up with a start at the sound of her maid's voice.

Her thoughts have carried her back to the night of the theatricals—to the well-remembered scenes of the play; and she gives a little shiver as she comes back to the common realities of life, and takes the plate of grouse-bones for which Marquis is sniffing in joyful anticipation.

"He will be more contented now, I daresay," suggests Langton cheerfully. "He seems quite uneasy to-night, just as though he knew he was missing something."

"No, Langton," says Theo, shaking her head. "It is that horror downstairs that annoys him; he seems to realize that our visitor is a suspicious character, and he is longing to escape. I should not give much for the poor man's chance if he did, though," she adds, with a glance of approval at the dog's massive head and deep muzzle.

"Now, Miss Theo, don't talk like that! A horror indeed—oh, dear! Why, I have just been having a chat with Caroline, and she says he is a real nice young gentleman."

"Does she?" says Theo incredulously. "What a pity it is that Caroline is not the one he ought to marry!"

At that very moment, while Theo is vowing vengeance against him upstairs, Philip Leveson is standing upon the tiger-skin before the library fire, with his hands in his pockets and his eyes fixed upon his patent-leather shoes, moodily ruminating over his present position, and inwardly anathematizing wills, marriages, and everything else.

"Is it then absolutely necessary that I should see her?" he is saying, in a tone which plainly betrays his distaste for the meeting with the object of his uncle's choice. "Can it not be arranged without?"

"Impossible, my dear fellow—impossible!" answers his host emphatically, though there are signs of regret on his thoughtful countenance, as his eyes rest approvingly upon Leveson's soldierly figure. "It is one of the conditions of the will that your refusal or acceptance of the terms is given in person and in the presence of the other legatee concerned; and, if matters can be arranged soon, it is a mistake to allow them to go on longer, probably to the detriment of other more important suits."

Here a significant smile parts the speaker's lips, as he takes a fusee-case from his pocket and strikes a match.

"Of course you have quite made up your mind upon the subject—you answer in the negative at once."

A quiet nod of assent is Philip Leveson's only reply.

"And Theo," proceeds Mr. Dudley—"well, in spite of everything I have said to her—and I can assure you I have done my utmost to point out to her the advisability of reconsidering her determination—notwithstanding all my assurances, she seems unwilling to—to——"

"In fact she refuses also," suggests the young man very shortly, bringing his host's long-winded speech to a speedy termination.

"Well, yes; she does refuse even as decidedly as you yourself. Of course in the eyes of the world this will place me in a somewhat false position; because, as you are well aware, if you both refuse, most of the money is to be divided amongst certain charities: but a part of it is bequeathed to me. Therefore people may say I have coerced my niece in her decision; but, as you know"—and Robert Dudley shakes his head solemnly—"I have the child's interest so much at heart that I would willingly waive my claim if only she would forget her Dudley pride for a while, and allow herself to be refused by you."

"Perhaps she will then."

"No, my dear fellow; I fear there is no chance of it. She has made up her mind, and, when Theo is determined—well, there is no moving her. However, you will see her for yourself to-night; and, if you can use your powers of persuasion, I am sure I shall be exceedingly grateful to you. Otherwise I have the papers ready for you; they only require your signature, and the matter is brought to an end."

"And a good thing too," mutters Philip Leveson, with a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders. "I am sure I shall be heartily thankful when it is all over."

"Very well. I will just go and look up those deeds I was telling you about, and then I will fetch my niece, when the business can be proceeded with at once."

The old man moves towards the door quite jauntily, with a flush of excitement upon his usually grim visage.

A legacy of forty thousand pounds! Ah, what a vista of pleasant possibilities does it not open up before him!

"Hang it all, what luck some fellows have!" mutters Leveson to himself, turning away impatiently. "Who in his senses would have imagined that Robert Dudley would be the only one to benefit by the Colonel's will? It is an awful shame"—angrily—"and yet I suppose it will be even harder upon the god-daughter, who has been looked upon as an heiress all her life, and has developed the long waist and very short temper peculiar to heiresses for no reason whatever."

He gazes meditatively into the depths of the briskly-burning fire. What could have induced his uncle—what reason could he possibly have had to make such an absurd stipulation?

He asked himself at least a dozen times during the last twenty-four hours, and yet he is still as hazy upon the subject as when he first heard the news from the lips of the family lawyer.

He is determined that the whole affair shall be concluded to-night; he will have nothing more to do with it when he has once put his signature to that paper; and after this evening Robert Dudley and his niece shall see him no more.

When he had arrived at this stage of his reflections, he is suddenly roused out of his reverie by the sound of a dog barking furiously.

He glances round, wondering where the animal is, but, even as he does so, the bark immediately changes to a deep angry bay; and, the door being flung wide open a huge St. Bernard comes bounding into the room.

"Good heavens!" ejaculates Leveson. "Where in the name of all that is wonderful have you sprung from?" starting slightly, and instinctively glancing in the direction of the poker and tongs. "Good dog—be quiet!"—assuming a gentle, persuasive tone, and looking rather uneasily at the intruder, who, having paused suddenly upon the threshold, now takes two steps forward growling ominously. "It is all right—come and speak to me like a good dog!"

But, alas, it seems as though no amount of cajoling will restore his evidently ruffled equanimity! Leveson is just beginning to realize that his position is one not altogether to be desired, when there is the sound of light footsteps evidently hurrying after the dog in hot pursuit, he hears frantic calls of "Marquis, Marquis—come back you bad dog!"—and the next minute a girl appears in the doorway, and seizes hold of the animal's collar.

"I—I am so dreadfully sorry! I hope you have not been frightened; but he—he escaped!" she gasps breathlessly.

It is Theo who speaks, with her fingers still tightly linked in the dog's collar and a look of the utmost anxiety in her beautiful eyes.

She raises her head, and for the first time glances quickly across the room to where her uncle's guest, Philip Leveson, is standing.

At the sight of him she starts back; all the candles seem to be dancing before her and the furniture and the pictures to be whirling round the room.

Philip Leveson, the man who is slowly advancing towards her, is—yes, surely she cannot be mistaken!—it is "Young Marlow!"

She must be asleep, dreaming. In another moment she will wake up and find herself back again in that cosy chair before her bed-room fire, with Marquis snoring contentedly at her feet.

Yet who is this by her side, who is holding her hand, who is speaking in that voice she would know among a thousand?

She gazes wildly round the room, then turns her eyes slowly back to that handsome face before her, and all the color suddenly leaves her cheeks.

"How stupid you will think me!" she exclaims when at last she is able to speak. "But I—I had not the remotest idea that I should find you here. Of everybody in the world you were the very last person I expected to meet."

"Really?"

Philip Leveson raises his eyebrows wonderingly.

"How very strange! That is the remark I was just going to make to you. If I had had a hundred guesses as to whom I was to meet here this evening, I should never have dreamt of guessing you."

"Of guessing me?" echoes Theo, looking somewhat startled, and hastily withdrawing her hand from his.

"No; I never was a lucky person, so that, if I had been told I was to have a surprise, I should have felt certain it would be a disagreeable one, and therefore"—laughing and making a slight bow—"should not have guessed you. But, as luck has been kind to me this time, I shall not waste any more minutes in expressing my feelings of astonishment. First, may I ask you now you are after your accident? I have so often thought of you, and wondered if you were not really more hurt than you imagined."

Theo involuntarily draws back a step, and stares in bewilderment at Leveson, who stands surveying her in the calmest manner possible.

"Oh, no, thanks! I—I am all right," she answers, seeing that she must make some reply, but still feeling decidedly perplexed. "I ought to thank you for all the trouble you have taken over poor Roy. I only heard this morning about his grave, but I knew there was nobody but you who would have thought of it."

"Do not speak of it, please; I was only too glad to be able to do anything for you," he returns, with rather more earnestness than the occasion demands. "I was very annoyed that I could not call at the Court to ask how you were; but, as you know, I had to leave Blankshire that same evening on account of my uncle's death. And now may I make friends with your dog? He evidently thought that I had no business to be here to-night. He would soon have made short work of me if you had not appeared upon the scene."

"Yes, Marquis, sit up and shake hands like a gentleman. He is in rather a bad temper this evening, I know,'—giving the dog a conciliatory pat upon his soft muzzle—"because when the gong sounded he was not allowed to go down to dinner as usual."

"Why, how was that? Ah, I see!"—meditatively. "Miss Dudley refused to dine with me, I suppose—and no wonder"—with a strange note of irony in his tone—"so of course you and the noble Marquis had to dine up-stairs and keep her company."

Theo raises her eyebrows apprehensively wondering what he can mean. Is she going mad. Has her brain suddenly given way under the anxieties and annoyances of the past few days?

Miss Dudley—can it be that he does not know that Theo Dudley herself is now standing before him? He must know; he must have discovered who she is long since; he cannot have been in such ignorance of the truth as she has been.

"That was so then, was it? Ah, I thought so!" continues Philip Leveson, bending down to shake the large white paw which, in obedience to his mistress's orders, Marquis has just thrust three successive times into his hand. "Well, I am not in the least astonished; for, if I am to confess the truth I must say I was never more thankful in my life than when I found I had another hour's reprieve. Of course you know all about this wretched will business now, you can quite understand my feelings upon the subject."

Instinctively Theo draws herself up to her full height, and stares in amazement at Leveson's perfectly unruffled countenance.

"I understand—oh, quite!" she rejoins, with sudden energy. "I never understood anything better in my life; but I—I cannot quite make out what you mean. Are you perfectly certain that—well, that you know who I am?"

"You?"—again he laughs. "Oh, dear, yes! Do you suppose that because you never troubled your head to find out who I was that I had no curiosity either? Surely you did not think that I should go off satisfied without at least discovering the real name of Miss Hardcastle! But for all that"—with another of the courteous bows which bring up such vivid recollections of a powdered wig, knee-breeches, and silk stockings—"I was greatly astonished to see you this evening."

Theo looks at him in despair. What does he mean?

Ah, of course he knows her well enough to realize that she is not totally devoid of pride, and that therefore in the circumstances she would most likely refuse to have an interview with him!

Certainly this conclusion does not exactly coincide with what he said a few minutes since regarding his good luck in meeting her once again; but then only a few moments since he had spoken of Miss Dudley's non-appearance at dinner, as if that hour had been a respite from something almost as terrible as an execution. A new light breaks in upon her; in a moment she sees it all. It is not herself who is mad, it is Major Leveson—he must be perfectly insane! At all events she will give him one more chance.

"So you dreaded the dinner too?" she says steadily, concentrating all her attention upon the St. Bernard's tawny head.

"Dreaded it! I should think I did!" returns the Major forcibly. "To me the whole thing has seemed like a hideous dream. I began to wish that the old Colonel had never remembered my existence; and to-day I seriously contemplated going off by the first 'P. and O.' to India in order to escape everybody and everything."

"It would certainly have been the most sensible thing to do," agrees Theo somewhat severely.

"I believe it would, especially now that I realize I can do no good by remaining, because I have learnt from Mr. Dudley that in both cases refusals are to be given, so that there is nothing for it but for the Colonel's fortune to be divided amongst the various charities which he has named and neither myself nor his god-daughter will receive a penny."

"No; but considering the conditions of the will, he might just as well have left his money to these easy inns and institutions in the first place, without even troubling to mention our names. It was certainly only waste of time, pen paper, and ink."

"'Our names,' though!" repeats Leveson, looking somewhat puzzled.

"Yes, 'our names!'" says Theo, clasping her hands before her, and looking steadily into his face. "You say you know who I am."

"Who you are!"

There is a distinct note of interrogation in Leveson's tone.

"Yes, who I am! You know"—hesitating slightly—"that I am Theo Dudley?"

"You—Theo Dudley!"

Had the girl declared herself to be the Queen greater dismay could not have been depicted upon his countenance.

"Theo Dudley!" he repeats once more, stepping back a pace, and regarding the slight form before him with dumbfounded amazement. "Surely there is some mistake! I cannot believe it."

"There is no mistake really; it is quite true. I am dreadfully ashamed to own it,

but I am undoubtedly Theo Dudley," she answers, with a smile of relief.

"Miss Dudley"—Leveson utters the name with an effort—"what will you think of me?"—suddenly approaching her and holding out his hand. "Will you forgive me? I never made such a fool of myself in all my life—but I was told that you always lived at the Court, as your father and mother were in India."

"You heard all that?" says Theo, in astonishment. "No wonder you were surprised to find me here to-night."

"Yes—no wonder," groans Leveson, stopping abruptly, and turning his head, as the master of the house suddenly appears in the doorway, where he has paused aghast at the scene which meets his eyes.

"Ah, there you are, Mr. Dudley! Your niece and I have just been making each other's acquaintance," observes the Major in his calm way, "and, strange to say, we actually find that we have met before."

"Met before—you and my niece!"

Mr. Dudley looks from one to the other in vague bewilderment.

"You know each other?" he gasps. "Where have you ever met?"

"Let me see—where did we first meet, Miss Dudley? Upon the stage at the De Wintons', was it not?" inquires Leveson, quite at his ease now.

Theo answers with a faint nod, but her uncle, turning to look at her, is struck for the first time by her strangely heightened color and the suspicious brightness of her eyes.

"Theo," he says sternly, "how is it that I was never told of this before? If you and Major Leveson were intimately acquainted, why did you not let me know at first?"

"Because, if you will allow me to explain, Mr. Dudley," interposes Leveson promptly, in response to an appealing glance from the girl at his side, "we met in rather peculiar circumstances, and were never properly introduced. The consequence was I mistook your niece for some one else, while she never heard my name at all; and, until we met in this room, ten minutes ago, we had neither of us the remotest idea of the real state of affairs."

Robert Dudley listens in silence to this explanation; but as Leveson finishes speaking he turns impatiently away.

"Theo, take that dog out of the room!" he says in a tone of extreme irritation, pointing loftily to poor Marquis, who in the present circumstances proves a handy butt for his indignation. "I cannot imagine why you should bring him down here; take him into the other room immediately. I am sure he cannot in any way add to Major Leveson's pleasure."

Leveson raises his eyebrows and regards his host with undisguised astonishment, wondering what can be the matter with him all at once.

Theo, who is evidently accustomed to his easily-ruffled temper, only raises her head a little higher, and, slipping her fingers within Marquis's collar, leads him quietly out of the room.

Mr. Dudley stands with an implacable countenance until the door has closed behind her and the sound of her footsteps has died away; then he sits down by the table, crosses his legs with an air of satisfaction, and looks questioningly towards the Major.

"Well, this will certainly facilitate matters. Perhaps after all it is the best thing that could possibly have happened," he observes with a sudden effort at cheerfulness.

Leveson, standing with his arms folded, gazing steadily into the fire, glances up quickly.

"You see I begin to be rather doubtful of the reality of the affair," adds the old man. "The will states that you are to make my niece's acquaintance, and that you are to know each other thoroughly before deciding as to your future; therefore I begin to wonder if five minutes or so spent in each other's society would constitute what the will deems an acquaintance. Had it not been for your anxiety to have matters arranged before your departure from England, I should have felt it my duty to—well, to put the arrangements off for a little while; but, as you have met before, I need not hesitate in withholding my consent."

Mr. Dudley leans back in his chair and calmly surveys Major Leveson's countenance—a more contented expression on his own.

This expression however is only momentary, for there is something in Leveson's face which calls up a sudden frown to the old man's brow.

His tone is not quite so jubilant when he speaks again.

"At any rate, there is nothing more to be done. I have only to call Theo in again, and, when you have put your signature to these papers, the whole affair is completed."

All this time the Major has been listening in silence; now however, as his companion finishes speaking, he moves towards the table.

"Then I think, if that is all there is to be done, we may as well leave it for the present," he says.

"Leave it! Leave what, my dear fellow?"

"Those papers"—pushing the important-looking documents somewhat recklessly aside. "There is no hurry; we need not trouble about them at present."

"But you—you leave England with your regiment next week. I thought you wished to have all settled before you went!"

"Yes, I did suggest it; but there is really no need. If all is completed within twelve months it is quite time enough."

Mr. Dudley rises stiffly from his chair and goes over to the fireplace.

"In twelve months! Yes, yes, of course!" is all the answer he makes. "It really is of no importance so long as it is done some time during the year."

Meanwhile Theo is waiting upstairs, expecting every moment to be summoned to undergo that terrible ordeal.

She had dreaded it before, she had thought of it as a hideous nightmare; but it is ten times more dreadful now, when the man who is to refuse her, who is to vow he will never marry her, is "Young Marlow," whose face has haunted her day and night for the past week.

She paces to and fro in her room, walks up and down the corridor like one demented, and at last, thoroughly worn out, throws herself down upon the wide cushioned window-seat at the head of the staircase to listen in an agony of suspense for the summons which must come sooner or later.

She is quite oblivious of the fact that an hour has slipped away, that the time has passed when any message is likely to come; and she springs to her feet, trembling in her agitation, when she hears the library door open, and a few minutes afterwards her uncle comes to the bottom of the staircase and calls her down.

Now that the time has arrived, she stands transfixed with alarm, and her uncle has to give a second more peremptory call before she collects her scattered senses and goes slowly down stairs.

"Be quick, Theo! Major Leveson is waiting; he wishes to say good night to you."

She pauses with her hand on the balustrade, and stares in astonishment. Good night!

What can he mean? The papers have not been signed—nothing has been done—he cannot be leaving yet!

Then she sees the Major coming towards her with a crush hat under his arm a long Inverness-cape reaching almost to his feet.

"Good night, Miss Dudley," he says; "it is very good of you to trouble to come down."

He takes her hand, but is it for just a few moments longer than etiquette usually permits, and then—it is her uncle who hurries him off.

There are a few more words, the sound of carriage wheels, the door is slammed to, and he is gone.

That bang of the door rouses Theo. She hesitates a moment, and then, descending the remaining stairs, follows her uncle resolutely into the library.

Mr. Dudley looks round at the sound of her footsteps.

"Well, Theo, good night, my dear; it is quite time you were in bed."

He stands by the table, tearing up and sorting a heterogeneous collection of letters and envelopes, with a somewhat preoccupied air.

"Yes, uncle Robert, I am going now; but what about Major Leveson—when is he coming again?"

The question seems to perplex him, for he starts slightly, and pauses with the letters in his hand.

"When is he coming? Why?" asks the old man shortly, with a steady penetrating glance at the girl's face, which Theo meets with the utmost sang-froid.

"Because I want to know when those papers are to be signed; I thought he came to-night on purpose to sign them."

"So I imagined," said her uncle, with a significant shrug of his shoulders; "but, now that I think of it"—with sudden sharp change of tone—"how much did you see of Major Leveson when you were with the Chandoses. Did you become what one would call intimate with him?"

Theo hates herself for the flush that instantly crimsons her face.

"I—I never saw him until the day before I left," she falters, endeavoring to speak in an unconcerned manner and failing signally.

"Not until the day before? Oh, then, you can know simply, entirely nothing of him!"

"No, nothing," agrees Theo, so faintly that at any other time her uncle's suspicions would be aroused.

"Oh, very well, that is all right! Major Leveson leaves for Gibraltar next week, and, as matters are now so far arranged, he thinks, as I do, that we may as well put off the actual signing of the deeds until his return. But it is time that you were in bed—so good night, Theo. Pleasant dreams, my dear; and remember, do not trouble that curly head of yours any more about that ridiculous will."

Theo cannot quite understand why his voice assumes such a tender intonation, nor why, in spite of his usual dislike to any affectionate demonstration, he suddenly lays his hand upon her shoulder, and, stooping down, kisses her almost lovingly upon her forehead.

CHAPTER IV.

"YES, she is coming this afternoon," says Lady Chandos, looking up, with a decidedly pleased expression on her face from a letter which has been engrossing her profound attention for the last few minutes.

"She? And pray, my dear, who is this very important personage who answers to that extremely comprehensive pronoun?" inquires Sir James from the other end of the breakfast-table.

"Why, Theo Dudley. Surely you have not forgotten? She is leaving Oldstone by the 2.33 this afternoon, and will arrive here at 5.14"—referring again to the letter in her hand.

"Is that the charming Miss Dudley whom I had the pleasure of meeting here about a month ago?" inquires the Honorable Augustus Craven, with an interested air.

"Yes; she was with us for some time, but unfortunately, the day after you saw her, her god-father died very suddenly, and she was obliged to go home at once. I was half afraid when I wrote that her uncle, with whom she lives, would not allow her to come again; but he has evidently consented, and more than that, James—accepts your invitation for a few day's shooting next week."

"I am glad to hear it," replies her husband warmly; "he will help us to keep that niece of his in order."

"Why, Chandos, is this charming Miss Dudley very difficult to manage?" inquires another guest somewhat superciliously.

"Well, no, not exactly. But pretty girls of one or two and twenty are always a responsibility, especially when report says they are very likely to inherit ten thousand a year!"

"Poor Theo—at any rate she has not the burden of her god-father's money this time; if all that I hear is true, he has treated her shamefully."

Lady Chandos looks quite indignant as she rises from the table and rings the bell to give orders about the carriage.

It is late in the afternoon when Theo arrives. The snow of the earlier part of the day has slowly turned to a light drizzle of sleet and rain, far more chilling and disagreeable than the soft feathery flakes which fell so persistently during the morning; and Chandos Court is wrapped in a thick mist as the carriage which has been sent to the station to meet Miss Dudley turns swiftly in at the lodge gates, and drives up the dark avenue.

In spite of the gloom of the outside world, the old Court itself presents quite an animated appearance, with its rows of mullioned windows lighted up, and the red glow of the lamps gleaming with hospitable cheerfulness from beneath the ancient stone porch.

"Then after all the Court is not quite empty," muses Theo, gazing through the misty panes at the blurred scene beyond, and then sinking back again among the cushions with an air of decided satisfaction.

"Uncle Robert fancied they were quite alone, or I am certain he would never have let me come. He seems to think that nobody should ever have any enjoyment; I suppose it is because he is past caring for it himself!"—breathing a sigh of relief at the thought of spending another fortnight under the pleasant roof of Chandos Court.

A few minutes later and once again she is back in that cosy old room in the west wing of Chandos Court, with her maid busily unpacking her huge black trunk, and Cecilia Chandos standing by the roaring fire telling her all the news of the past four weeks.

"Of course poor Jack Greville is still in the neighborhood!" says Lady Chandos, as she holds out one dainty buckled shoe to the warmth of the blazing logs.

"He was quite disconsolate after you left; and even the other day, when I saw him at the meet, he looked so utterly miserable that I decided then and there that he must have another opportunity of seeing you again; and, without wasting a single hour, I wrote to you to ask your uncle to spare you."

Theo leans back in her chair with a light laugh.

"What a wonderful imagination you do possess! I think I am the last person in the world who could possibly make him any happier. But what other news is there?"

"News! Ah, I was almost forgetting! Do you remember that man who acted with you at the De Wintons? You have not forgotten surely? He was the Major whose name we never heard—'Y. M.'"—smiling—"you recollect?"

Theo hesitates and then nods, as though her recollection of the man in question is very indistinct.

"Well—would you believe it?—he has turned out to be one of the Levesons—a nephew in fact of your old god-father! And James has actually invited him to come this week for a few days' hunting and shooting."

"And is he coming?" exclaims Theo, in alarm.

"Well, no; he is not coming—he has come. He arrived to-day!"

"To-day?"

"Yes; so you will renew your acquaintance with him at dinner this evening, which by-the-way"—looking somewhat anxiously at the clock and preparing to depart—"will be in half an hour."

Theo feels quite angry with herself as a burning blush overspreads her face; her pulses quicken and her heart beats violently.

It is really too bad, she murmurs to herself, turning quite indignantly to the fire again as Lady Chandos leaves the room. He—he had really no business to tell uncle Robert that he was going to Gibraltar if he had no intention of doing so.

I would sooner have stayed at home and not have spoken to a single soul this year than to have come here to meet that man again.

And how am I to meet him? I cannot possibly avoid him quite; if I even attempt such a thing, I am sure to find myself sitting next to him at every meal; yet, if I do not avoid him, he—well, I suppose the horror will think that I am trying to make him change his mind.

No; it is of no use, I will not meet him. I cannot; it is out of the question. I shall send Langton to tell Cecilia that I have a bad headache, and am not able to go down to dinner. She will perhaps believe me; and, if she does not, there is no help for it. If she does not know about that horrible will now, she will have to know some time I suppose, so she may just as well be told to-night."

"There is very little time; Miss Theo; you will be late if you do not make haste. I have unpacked all your things."

Theo groans at the sound of Langton's voice.

Is the whole household to know of the unfortunate strait in which she is placed—for, alas, one glance at herself in the mirror tells her that she was never looking better in her life, and that therefore nobody will ever be so blind as to believe that she has a headache?

And, worse than all, she is hungry—dreadfully, most unromantically hungry—and, if she is to keep up the delusion of her sudden indisposition, she will have to be content with a cup of tea and a few very invalid-like-looking pieces of thin dry toast.

No; it is impossible; she cannot starve for all the Major Levesons in the world; and, having arrived at this conclusion, she immediately rises from her chair and, glancing anxiously at the clock, gives vent to an exclamation of alarm.

Much to Langton's surprise, she finds her young mistress most difficult to please this evening.

She will not look at the dress which has been laid out for her, but insists upon wearing a lovely gown which the careful maid had determined must appear only on some great occasion; she is also dissatisfied with the way in which Langton has dressed her hair, pulling it all down, and coiling it up herself into a soft knot at the top of her head.

Poor bewildered Langton is well repaid for her trouble however, for, as Theo hurries away at the stroke of the half-hour, the maid realizes with a feeling of complacence that never before has she seen her young mistress look sweeter or prettier.

As for Theo, she is perfectly unconscious of the success which has attended her efforts, and enters the drawing-room with a slight frown contracting her brows.

She is therefore perfectly oblivious of the fact that the pair of blue eyes which are watching her entrance from the other side of the room are filled with an expression of the deepest admiration.

How horrified he will be at seeing her there again! is the one thought which is uppermost in Theo's mind, as, pausing to shake hands with Sir James Chandos, she catches a glimpse of a tall military figure.

"It is the most unfortunate thing that could have happened," she muses, answering Sir James's numerous inquiries in monosyllables, and laughing faintly at the Honorable Augustus Craven's feeble jokes. Yet she is vaguely cognizant of a sense of gratification as, a moment later she hears a well-known voice behind her, and, turning, discovers Major Leveson at her side, holding out his hand to her in a genial smile.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WANTED TO BE THERE.—Bidel was a celebrated animal trainer, but not all of his adventures were with that portion of the animal kingdom classed as "wild." Early in life, after having apprenticed himself to a travelling dentist, and after being driven from home by the cruelty of a lion-taming step-father, jealous of his budding prowess, M. Bidel fell a victim to a pair of soft eyes that softened still more when he was near.

He called upon her father, and his ardent suit drew from that worthy the sole remark, "Are you a fool, my boy?"

Such a little thing as that however, could not defeat so valiant a soul as M. Bidel, and after getting a deal of money he made another application. This time there was a new objection.

His conduct, he was told, had not been above reproach, and one English lady in particular has been conspicuous in following M. Bidel about, never missing a performance where he was to enter the lion's den. M. Bidel protested that he knew nothing about the woman.

Fair creatures in all ranks of life, be admitted, persisted in following him about, but was he responsible for that? He simply could not keep them from running after him.

The father was obdurate, and at last M. Bidel demanded that the matter should be put to the test—that the English woman should be compelled to state her intentions. Two gentlemen were selected as umpires, and at the next performance they approached the Englishwoman. M. Bidel was about to marry, they remarked to her.

"Well," she replied, "what is that to me? Is he going to retire from business?"

It was explained that her attentions to the tamer had been so remarkable as to create unpleasant comment.

"Pray don't concern yourselves," she said, laughing contemptuously; "I'm a widow and like to amuse myself, and if I go about after this menagerie, it is because I want to be there when this gentleman is [illegible]!"

UNITED States Consul Griffin, stationed at Sydney, N.S.W., alludes to a remarkable custom of the inhabitants of New Britain, as follows: "The inhabitants, it is said by Wallace, have a peculiar custom of confining their girls in cages until they are old enough to be married. The cages are made of twigs of the palm tree, and the girls are put into them when only two or three years of age.

ANGELS UNAWARE.

BY R. S. T.

The angels come and the angels go,
But they make no shadows by which we know
They are here; and only their fading light
Shows how they have illumed our night.

Too busy were we to hear the lay
Of the bird that sang at our door all day—
Not till it left us, and trees were bare.
And the empty nest hung silent there,
Did we know that it lighted our life and care,
And an angel had sung to us unaware.

SOPHY.

BY S. U. W.

CHAPTER I.

I AM very far from intending to tell my own story, and shall accordingly be as short as I can on matters which only concern myself, but I must mention that I lived to the age of thirty-nine, without ever supposing I should have to take service; however, at that date, my father, a market gardener in a fair-seeming way of business, died bankrupt, and I was thankful when by means of my kind friend and god-mother, Mrs. Brand, I got the situation of a young ladies' maid to the two Miss Laghis, step-daughters to Mr. Charlesworth of Sweetfields.

Mrs. Brand was the vicar's wife of Maddersley; Sweetfields lies just within the south-eastern boundries of Upper Maddersley. I had often looked through those palings as I went by, and thought that with the little stream threading it, and sloping lawns and stretch of field-land and cool fir-walk Sweetfields, to those who called it home, must be indeed a pleasant place. It is my home now, and I know that the idea did not mislead me.

When I first went to Sweetfields, Mr. Charlesworth was a new bridegroom, yet past his forty-fifth year; a bookish dreamy gentleman, to whom not a soul in Maddersley, though talk of the kind is as well liked there as anywhere else, had once thought of giving a wife.

He met a lady of his choice at Torquay; she was a widow, some ten years younger than himself, and had been twice married, first as a mere girl to an Italian silk-merchant, Alessandro Laghi; her second name was Blay.

The only child of the second marriage had died in infancy; of the other there were two daughters, Miss Laghis, and these young ladies, Mr. Charlesworth and their mother had determined to establish at Sweetfields with a governess and a few servants, while they made a stay of a year or it might be more (and so afterwards proved) in foreign parts.

There were cook and housemaid, with a strong girl under them to help in the work of both, and a boy, in a livery-jacket to wait and and answer the bell; these, with myself made up the number indoors, and turned out to be quite sufficient; no company was kept, the young ladies being still in the school-room.

Miss Delamayn, the governess whom Mrs. Charlesworth had engaged for them, came one day, her pupils the next; I believe we all looked on one another a little doubtfully at first; it was an awkwardness that soon wore off.

But now I must not go any further, without giving some description of Lauretta and Sophy—so my young mistresses were called.

Lauretta had just turned her seventeenth year. She was short and plump, with the prettiest dimpled arms and hands I ever saw, and little feet:

I should exaggerate, perhaps, if I were to call her a beauty, but at any rate, it was impossible to look at her without pleasure. She had features of infantine softness, a peachy complexion which got a sprinkling of freckles as the summer heat came on, reddish hair, not in great quantity, but what there was of it, soft as silk, and tending to curl; small sleepy hazel eyes, twinkling into starry brightness when she laughed or was eager over anything; add to this, a look of simplicity and dependency on others and a trick of biting in her under-lip, and you have Lauretta, as far as outward appearance goes, complete.

You would never have taken Sophy for her sister.

She was two years the younger, taller than Lauretta, yet not tall; very strongly made.

To tell the truth, the first time I saw her, with her marked meagre cast of face, and sallow skin and dark burning eyes, I thought her like nothing so much as one of those poor wandering Italian boys we see here, earning their ounce coppers about our doors; she was more chary of her smiles, the effect was the same, a brilliant beautiful flush, teeth of pearl showing, the whole countenance altering in less than a moment.

Both Lauretta and Sophy were very childish in some respects, totally unacquainted with the notions of any part of life beyond that narrow one which had been their own; they had grown up under the rule of their mother's uncle, who, it seemed had a farm in a wild corner of Kent; their mother, since she married her second husband, and Sophy was then but three years old, had almost been a stranger to them. He was a spendthrift and a rogue, Miss Delamayn told me; they separated at the end of a few years, and Mrs. Blay, as she was at that time, took to living with ladies in need of a companion; she was in some such post when Mr. Charlesworth met and married her at Torquay.

Mr. Blay had been dead two years.

Money being scarce, and no female relative with them at the farm, these girls had but three frocks apiece, of which, one was unfit to wear and the best by no means new; their underclothing was in a sad state of disrepair, though Sophy, the most active one of the sisters, had cobbled the rents, after a fashion, for herself and Lauretta too.

I was glad to find that Miss Delamayn had been allowed a handsome sum for the replenishing of their wardrobe.

Lauretta went half crazy with delight over her new attire; Sophy was charmed to see Lauretta dressed, and indifferent as to her own part in the business; she had, with the masculine strength and something the appearance of a boy, tastes and habits to correspond.

Riding, cricket, venturous climbing, shooting at a mark, the rearing of young animals,—these, I gathered, had been her favorite pursuits, Lauretta sharing in them as far as she was able, and contented to be outshone.

The affection between the two was something extraordinary; though of such different dispositions, they lived in perfect sympathy and the most intimate understanding of one another.

Sophy's passion for her sister seemed the more remarkable, because she did not easily attach herself to any one, acting as if she had fully enough in Lauretta's love, but the elder girl was soft-hearted and caressing and made friends with readiness; Miss Delamayn preferred her far above Sophy, as was natural; Sophy was always my favorite.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlesworth had been married just a year, when a child was born to them, a daughter; I felt pretty certain that they would bring the infant to England as soon as prudence allowed, but I was mistaken.

Another year went over, Miss Delamayn and I began to look at the blooming fully-developed Lauretta, now past nineteen, and wonder how long she and Sophy were to be left to their studies and seclusion, when a change came.

Mrs. Charlesworth died at Nice, a town in southern France, of a sudden inflammation of the lungs; Mr. Charlesworth writing home, announced his intention of returning at once to Sweetfields with his child; the lady who had enjoyed her ease and variety of diversions such a short while was to be buried abroad.

Something happened, however, which obliged Mr. Charlesworth to alter his plan. Sophy sickened with scarlet fever; Miss Delamayn at once took Lauretta away to lodgings in Maddersley, while I remained in charge of the young girl.

As soon as it became surely evident that she had not caught the infection, Lauretta joined her step-father at Fontainebleau, near Paris.

Sophy was long and violently ill; the doctor who attended her, had more fears for her than I could share in; at the highest of the fever, and later, when extreme weakness followed it, I never felt death near, and I was right.

She recovered, and as soon as she grew strong enough, the doctor ordered her to the sea: it was arranged that she should go for six weeks to Deal, under my sole care.

By the time we left Sweetfields, spring was drawing into summer; Mr. Charlesworth had sent his agent orders to have the house done up from roof to basement, while we were away; at the end of June, or at the beginning of July, it was expected that he would return there, and Lauretta, of course with him.

Keeping this reunion with her sister, while no longer very distant, steadily in view, Sophy bore her loneliness with a great deal of patience; we contrived to make out some happy hours at Deal, and the girl's native vigor came back to her apace.

Her looks were improved by her illness; she had gained in height; her skin was more clear and her features seemed softer; a blush of red showed in her cheeks, which used to be singularly colorless; in a word, Sophy began to grow handsome, but with no more consciousness of her person or wish to excite admiration than formerly.

One afternoon, about a week before we came away from Deal, I had left Sophy happily absorbed, as I thought, in a letter from Lauretta, and busied myself in the kitchen, getting tea.

As I returned, Sophy met me at the door of the parlor, with a pale face and her large eyes staring wistfully and half-frightened out of it.

I set down the tray in a hurry, and then without a word, she put the letter into my hand. I enquired if I was to read it; she made a sign in the affirmative and walked out of the room.

My Own Darling Sis,—(Lauretta wrote)—My precious one, how can I write you my great news? you will be surprised, I know, and so was I, for I am not a hundredth part good enough or clever enough, darling. I am engaged to be married to Mr. Grandire. I have mentioned him several times, you know, and described him a little, but not nearly nice enough, he is quite perfect. We have often talked about my Sis, and he is going to love you exactly like a sister, and I seem to love my Sis and long for her more than I did before. You must love him and be sweet to him, or it will spoil all for me. His name is Henery, but I have not called him by it yet. He is very particular and difficult to please; I can't think why he likes silly me. He has a castle in Ireland; fancy you and me in a castle! It is post-time, so I must stop. Papa's love, little Lulu's too, our sweet weeny sister; good-bye darling, mind you write directly and put some kisses in and tell me you're glad for it.

Your lovingest
LAURY.

I read this scrawl, for it was no better, three or four times through, and I was still sitting and looking at it when Sophy came in again.

She continued very pale, but had a kind of fixed serenity in her expression; I told her I hoped she would feel able to take part in Lauretta's joy, and she answered gravely:

"Yes, Ellen, I am glad for Laury's sake; Laury always thought it must be a good thing to get married."

With this speech she began and ended; I do not believe I heard her allude to the subject again.

I need scarcely that Mr. Grandire did not appear in the eyes of other people as the angel Lauretta painted him. He was a rather dark young man of four- or five-and-twenty, with a melancholy brow and quiet manners.

I saw little of him, but, when I had the opportunity, I studied his face carefully, and I thought I could read a difficult exacting temper in the lines of it.

I am aware now, from after experience of the gentleman's ways, that my opinion was correct.

Sunny manageable little Lauretta was made for his happiness; his eye lightened when it rested on her, and, for her part, she fairly adored him.

He exerted himself to get intimate with Sophy, but not very successfully; there remained always a certain distance between them, which neither his attempts to please her, nor Sophy's determined civility, did much to lessen; fortunately for Lauretta, she was not quick-sighted, and so long as her lover and sister appeared like friends, made herself quite content.

I found a new phase of things at Sweetfields; the household was put back on its former footing, and Miss Louisa Charlesworth's foreign maid having been suddenly been detected in a serious piece of misconduct, Mr. Charlesworth got such a fright, that nothing else would suit him but I must undertake the superintendence of the nursery.

I had a steady girl under me, and was not obliged to give up attending my young ladies.

Now, hoping to be excused for the broken haphazard way in which I write, I shall travel on to the first week in September. The thirtieth day of that month was fixed for the wedding.

Mr. Grandire being a rich man, and with no one's pleasure to consult beyond his own, there was no reason for deferring it; but as Lauretta and Sophy were still in mourning for their mother, the ceremony was to be perfectly private and quiet. Mr. Grandire was staying in London.

Maddersley is almost a suburban place, thirteen miles from town by rail; he came down three or four times a week.

Sophy's unjealous satisfaction in the spectacle of Lauretta's felicity outwent my best expectations; I trusted that as time went on, she and Mr. Grandire would somehow get drawn closer together.

Thus serenely then were we situated, and I am sure no presentiment of disaster troubled any of us. Alas, it was close at hand!

CHAPTER II.

ONE evening when Mr. Grandire was coming to dinner, I went into the young ladies' room at six o'clock. Dinner was not until half-past seven, but Lauretta, I know, would not want to be dressed early; Mr. Grandire was expected in half an hour.

The sisters had gone together for a stroll down Mill Lane, the narrow country-looking road, with no way for carriages, into which two doors opened from the grounds of Sweetfields: one at the end of the fir-walk, the other nearer the house.

I was surprised not to see them returned, for Lauretta had only accompanied Sophy on the understanding that their walk was not to extend beyond a quarter of a mile.

However, I concluded that the beauty of the evening, mild as midsummer, and bathed in the last light of the sun, had tempted them to linger, and so my thoughts were busy within me, I did not tire of waiting or notice enough how time slipped away, until I started to hear Lauretta's new French clock, a present from an aunt of Mr. Grandire, strike the half-hour; then I had a sensation of uneasiness, but, nearly at the same moment, there were steps along the passage, and the young ladies came in.

Lauretta's face was disfigured with crying, almost past recognition; she turned it away as she saw me, and walked to one of the windows, where she stood, looking out.

Sophy had shed no tears, but the faint flush her cheeks wore, when I saw her start with Lauretta, was deepened to crimson; she had not so much sorrow as a kind of violence in her altered aspect, something I cannot give any notion of in words; it alarmed me more than the traces of Lauretta's passionate weeping.

"My dears!" I could but exclaim—"Miss Lauretta!—Miss Sophy!—is there any bad news?"

"There is no news, Ellen," said Sophy, composedly taking off her hat and gloves and laying them on a chair. "Laury, it is twenty-five minutes of seven; get dressed."

I saw that for once I was not to be confided in, so, though I felt my heart flutter with dismay, I said no more. The business of dressing was proceeded with as usual, only in dreary silence.

I put some rosewater in Lauretta's hand-basin, and with infinite pains, she succeeded after a time in restoring her delicate complexion to something more like its natural hues; but when she was at last all ready to go down to her lover, she suddenly faltered, trembled, gave a piteous look at Sophy, and, sinking down on the end of her bed, burst again into tears.

"Miss Laury!" I cried—"Miss Laury, love, what ails you?"

"It's nothing—nothing, Ellen," she protested through her sobs; then, as if seeing the folly of her words, "It's my head—oh, my head aches so!" she said. "What shall I do?"

I glanced towards Sophy, who stood a little aloof, with her eyes straight before her, and that same dreadful bitter look working in her features.

"Miss Sophy," I said vehemently, "I can't bear to see you look so; there must be something wrong in your heart to come out like that!"

I scarcely knew what I said, but boldness never offended Sophy.

"My heart! I am not thinking about my heart, Ellen," she answered half absently. "Please" she added, "you had better leave us."

I saw her gather Lauretta maternally to her, (she was always the leader and protector,) and I hurried away to the nursery with the contagion of a woe I could not even guess at, strong in my breast. Celia, my nurse-maid, said I looked cold.

"Miss Lulu is in the drawing-room," she went on. "The master came and fetched her himself, and you are to go for her, Mrs. Wilson, a. twenty minutes past seven o'clock."

When I went down the young ladies had not appeared. Mr. Grandire stood on the hearth-rug in front of a new-lit fire, all impatience and perplexity, as I could see, although he was for preserving his usual rather formal demeanor.

I could not wonder that he felt doubtful what to think, for his simple Lauretta would usually fly to him the moment she knew he was in the house.

Mr. Charlesworth was on the sofa at some game with his little girl, equally delightful to both.

The precocious elf-like child shook her head when she saw me, and very intelligibly decided that she did not mean to go up in the nursery with Ellen.

Her father could never bear to see her thwarted, and I was fruitlessly trying to persuade her with promises, when the door opened, on which Mr. Grandire's wearied eyes were fixed, and Lauretta and Sophy, in their black silk frocks, entered hand in hand.

It was still very evident that Lauretta had been crying, but as her face sprang into smiles and a flush of emotion at the sight of her lover, those marks on her face showed less.

Mr. Grandire saw them, however, and surveyed her anxiously, retaining her hand while he exchanged a proper greeting with Sophy, who the next moment joined me by the sofa.

Lulu had a partiality for her black-haired step-sister, unaccountable to me; Sophy I thought treated the child in a manner quite out of keeping with her infant years; but so it was, and now, docile directly and well-pleased she left her pretended carriage for Sophy's arms, and let herself be taken upstairs without a single cross word or cry. I followed in silence.

I have been particular in recounting my impression of that evening, because a marked change in the behavior and spirits of the two young ladies dated from it.

Mr. Grandire, if so happened had been obliged to make his visit one of farewell, if the term be not too solemn, when he was only to remain away two weeks.

Some disaster occurring on his Irish property, he was urgently needed there, and whatever Mr. Grandire's faults of temper may be, certainly he was never known to put inclination before duty.

Every one in the house, but myself, ascribed Lauretta's constant dejection to his absence.

Mr. Charlesworth rallied her mildly; Miss Delamayn thought it right to show her the sinfulness of giving way to such overstrained sentimental sorrow.

Lauretta listened languidly without denying the charge; I felt sure that it went far wide.

She continued to weep in secret—that is, when alone with Sophy; for the two were more inseparable than ever, and her round face got a look of care very strange to it; even her bright bloom seemed fast fading.

Sophy did not bear about her any such unmistakeable marks of suffering as Lauretta; but I, knowing her so well, saw that the trouble was divided between them, as indeed it could not be otherwise.

They withdrew themselves a great deal, and in the few country walks they took, wanted neither other society nor attendance.

Miss Delamayn remarked that she supposed it was natural they should make the most of what short time they had left to spend together in the old way, and so everything combined to prevent their conduct from appearing inexplicably singular.

I was the only one who suspected a mystery, and tired myself out with unaided melancholy conjectures; my waking hours were overcast: all the dreams I had, miserable.

In this way, more than half the time of Mr. Grandire's stay in Ireland had gone by when on a Sunday evening, about six o'clock, I was returning from the new cemetery, where I had been to lay a cross of white dahlias on my father's grave; it was his birthday.

As I came to the top of Mill Lane, I saw Sophy issue quickly from the gate of an untenanted farmhouse belonging to Mr. Charlesworth, which stood on the opposite side of the road—opposite, that is, to Sweetfields.

I say untenanted; an old woman and her granddaughter lived there as caretakers, but I knew that they were in the habit of shutting the place up early on Sunday morning, and going to spend the day with relations in Maddersley; they would not return before night.

I began to wonder with a strange thrill what had taken Sophy at this hour into the neglected lonely garden of the farm, and then I rebuked myself, for I knew that but for my rooted notion of something amiss, I should have thought little of seeing her there.

She waited for me to join her, which helped to reassure me, and I noticed directly an irrepressible animation in her air and a particular gleaming in her dark eyes; she appeared elate.

But soon, as I walked by her side, I found that her frock and mantle were faintly impregnated with the smell of tobacco, and very bad tobacco too; this may seem a trivial thing, yet it brought back all my nameless apprehensions.

"Miss Sophy, dear," I said as quietly as I could, "where can you have been to get so unpleasantly scented?"

Sopoy started.

"You need not walk with me then, Ellen," she replied after a moment, standing still and raising her head with a proud air; but her bosom panted—"you can go on."

She signed with her hand.

"Miss Sophy," I said, stopping too (this was a quiet road always, and now entirely deserted), "you are cruel, pretending to misunderstand me. I thought you considered me a friend, a very humble one, I know, but feelings——"

I could say no more, I walked quickly on.

Sophy followed me. Her masterful little hand came pushing through my arm.

"How foolish!" she said. "Of course we are friends. There—don't let us talk any more!"

I had to be satisfied with this reconciliation; explanation was not to be looked for.

Lauretta and Sophy were closeted together for nearly an hour, when the younger girl came in, and from that time I saw Lauretta, there was no mistaking it, raise her head like a revived flower; back came the frequent laugh and the airy demeanor, and the sweet colors, and all the gay idle ways.

Sophy shared in the relief, after her undemonstrative fashion, the cloud cleared off suddenly and secretly as it had arisen; and now was I too at ease? I cannot say so.

CHAPTER III.

IT was about this time that we heard of young Mr. French being expected at Sweetfields. He was the son of Mr. Charlesworth's only sister, who had died early, leaving this one boy. An out-of-the-way name he had—Fabien.

The father was an Englishman by birth and breeding, but after his wife's death had gone over to America, where he was one of the partners in a thriving mercantile concern.

I had often sat looking at a tall, blue-eyed Miss Eg antine Charlesworth in Maddersley church, when I was a growing girl and she a charming young lady; I used to admire her past everything, and now I felt a curious interest in the thought of seeing her son. I little dreamed what manner of meeting our first was to be.

Mr. Grandire returned, the days passed on wings, we found ourselves at the 27th of September—the wedding, as I said before, was appointed for the 30th of the same month.

Well, that 27th! It opened tranquilly enough. Mr. Grandire came down early in the morning, and at twelve o'clock drove Lauretta over to Kingsferry, a town six miles from Maddersley, where they were to pay a long-promised visit to an invalid lady, an old friend of the Charlesworth family.

Mr. Charlesworth accompanied them. Sophy was invited, but she begged off from the expedition. Mr. French, I must not forget to say, had written that he should arrive at his uncle's house on the 28th.

I myself had a trifling yet necessary purchase to make in Maddersley; in fact I wanted to match the trimming of the silver-grey gown I had made for Lauretta's wedding, with two-dozen small buttons, some of which I had bought, inconsiderately attracted by a prettiness in the shape, turning out to be of too light a color.

I gave Lulu her tea at five, left her with a new picture-book on Celia's lap, and set briskly forth, a little disappointed that Sophy, being alone, had not not come up to ask for a cup of tea in the nursery. Miss Delamayn had gone to see a married sister in London.

It was a cloudy chill evening as if tending to rain; I walked so fast, for though stoutish, I was yet very active, that by the time I got to Field's, a high-class draper's shop, right opposite the Maddersley parish-church, I felt myself in a glow.

I stood a minute at the window, and then turning to pass in, became aware that a man whom I noticed lounging along the street as I came up, had stopped a short distance from me, and was making me the object of a fixed, uncivilly attentive stare.

I felt puzzled, but I was too old to be embarrassed or distressed; I gave him a steady look, which he returned with a half-repressed meaning smile, and seemed for fully a moment as if he were going to speak, hesitated however, and finally turned on his heel and walked on at his former slow swaggering pace.

His appearance, before this oddness in his behavior drew my notice, had struck me disagreeably; he looked about thirty, was dressed smartly in new clothes, he had an ill-bred air yet an undeniable handsomeness about him too, a square upright figure and red-and-white complexioned face with a brown and bushy moustache and darker hair.

He walked away, and I persuaded myself that he might not be entirely sober, and so put the matter out of my head. My father's old friend, Mr. Field, came to the counter himself.

I had soon selected the right buttons, but could not get away without going round into the parlor to chat awhile with his wife; thus more time went by than I knew, as I found when I came out again and looked at the church-clock.

I hurried back between the lamps and lighted shops of Maddersley, and through the duller streets of Upper Maddersley, and on along the bit of lonely meadow-skirted high road, from which a byway (leading down, if one followed it further, to the corner of Mill Lane) took me in less than five minutes round to the servants' entrance of Sweetfields.

I do not know why, but I had no sooner got inside the house, than, seeing Rose Miller, the under-housemaid, I enquired after Sophy.

"Miss Sophy is out," said Rose—and as I exclaimed in surprise—"Miss Sophy is only gone in the grounds," she added; "she is so fond of being out at twilight."

This was true.

I found Lulu in a restless fretty mood; I knew she would not sleep if I put her to bed like that; so, with her arms round my neck and her flaxen head nestling on it, down we came into the hall, to listen for the carriage; it was expected almost every minute.

Lulu, now at the height of contentment, began making a little singing sound, not unlike some hedge-birds, a sure sign that she was happy; I walked her up and down, regretting to feel my burden so light, Lulu was the slenderest child I ever had to do with.

Suddenly she cried out, "Wheels! wheels!" I could not hear them so soon, but at the same moment some one rang the front-door bell; the footman ran to open it, and there, in the light of the great lamp, stood an unlooked-for, dismaying apparition—a young man mortally pale, yet his face wore a smile; he had his coat open, and a handkerchief held against his breast, streaming with blood.

I confess my first thought was to keep the tender infant in my arms from seeing the blood; I must have seemed to act like a person distracted with terror, as I flew up the stairs.

I merely pushed Lulu screaming with disappointment into Celia's arms and bade the girl to keep the nursery-door fast till I returned; then I ran back to the hall.

I had known the wounded youth the instant I set my eyes on him; no one who had seen his mother as a girl could mistake those features, the peculiarly blue eye and elegant make of figure; it was Mr. Charlesworth's nephew, Fabin French.

I got to the hall again, as he just sat down on one of the oaken chairs; I told Gibbons to fetch some brandy, and supported Mr. French as best I could, for he was half fainting, yet he spoke and thanked me with a great deal of courtesy.

I thought Gibbons dawdled intolerably, though the poor fellow, I believe, really made all the haste he could, and was not gone above two or three minutes; however, before I had the brandy, Mr. French fell in a dead swoon.

Gibbons cried out he was dead indeed, but I knew better than that. While I put the brandy to his lips, and now the whole household getting astir, Mrs. Parpworth, the cook, brought cold wet linen, and the silly girls in the servants' hall set up a shrieking and sobbing which we could hear quite plainly.

In the middle of this scene, the carriage dashed up to the door; Miss Delamayn was there too; in a moment the hall appeared full of people and all was distress, confusion, aimless movement, crossing half-heard talk.

Mr. Grandire did best; hearing that the coachman had already ridden off to Maddersley for a doctor, he ruled down the miserable bustle, sent the servants, with the exception of Gibbons and myself, from the spot, requested Lauretta, who had behaved very creditably, to take hysterical Miss Delamayn into the drawing-room, and himself, with the assistance of Gibbons, carried Mr. French straight up to bed.

Mr. Charlesworth I pitied sincerely; he leant against the wall of the passage as we entered Mr. French's room, trembling in an agony of concern—"His father's only child!" he repeated several times despairingly.

It was evident that with the unaccustomed signs of a violent accident before his eyes, he at once, without waiting for opinion or examination, gave the young man up for lost.

All these things take more time to describe than they did in the happening; it was not really long before Mr. French recovered consciousness, and by the time Dr. Springwater (the gentleman who had attended Sophy) and a surgeon from Maddersley hospital, arrived together, he was well able to speak.

They gave a good account of the injury, which was a pistol-shot wound, a little below the neck, on the left side—of a simple nature, I think they said; but what satisfied Mr. Charlesworth more than anything else, was their telling him that he need not alarm old Mr. French or inform him of the event, except lightly in the usual way of letter writing.

When Mr. Charlesworth heard them say this, he could breath and look about him again, and the whole house in a less degree felt the same; a weight on all spirits was as if moved away.

The first moment I got time to sit down and think, my mind darted to Sophy. She had not shown herself.

Lulu, tired-out, was sleeping quietly in her crib.

I wanted to find my other charge; since her illness, Sophy always appeared to me a little in that light. I went and knocked at the young ladies' door.

"Come in," said Lauretta's voice; she was standing at the mirror, trying to fix some chrysanthemums in her hair.

Sophy, still in the short black-and-white plaid cloak, and knitted cap, which she usually wore in the garden, knelt by the window. I told her that dinner, which had been put off, would be ready in ten minutes; she turned round.

"There is plenty of time," she answered quickly.

"I don't like chrysanthemums," remarked Lauretta; "they look made-up. I like myself better without them: what do you say, Ellen?"

"The white relieves your black, miss," I said, "let me arrange them for you."

While I did so, I noticed how dull Sophy looked, as if over-fatigued.

"Have you potted out the mignonette you promised me from your garden, Sis?" Lauretta inquired.

"Yes," said Sophy.

"You lamb! Do you think it is going to thrive?"

"Yes," said Sophy again.

Lauretta looked round quickly at her sister.

"Are you grieving for papa?" she asked. "So would I indeed, but he is quite cheerful now; I heard Dr. Springwater say it was only a matter of some pain and a little time, and men ought not to mind pain, you know, and Mr. French has nothing to do; his time doesn't signify."

"I am not grieving," said Sophy steadily. "I have not tender enough feelings for that. Ellen look as if she did not believe me, but it is true nevertheless."

Lauretta sat down on her lap.

"I asked papa if we should put it off," she said (she alluded to the wedding), "but he said, no. You'll kiss Henry—won't you, Sis?—afterwards."

"I don't mind," said Sophy gently, "if it is the custom."

"Ellen!" cried Lauretta in a sudden rapture; "will you look at this darling here?"

"I am sorry to see Miss Sophy rather pale," I said.

Lauretta touched her rosy fingers to Sophy's cheek.

"Henry says you will be a beauty some day," she half whispered. "When you are with us, I shall give balls, and every one will be saying, 'Who is that peerless girl?' and the answer will be: 'Don't you know?' Mrs.—" here Lauretta blushed, but went boldly on—"Mrs Gandire's sister."

"Henry is wondering where you are," said Sophy.

"Let him wonder a minute longer," Lauretta replied.

Sophy had been sitting quite still, until now, she embraced Lauretta with a burst of emotion such as she seldom showed.

"Oh, Laury!" she cried, almost wildly. "Laury! Laury! Laury!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

IN THE MIDST OF TRADE.—An incident of an impressive character occurred at the Chicago Board of Trade last week. The room was in the usual uproar, it being within an hour of closing time, when the old cat started to move her family.

She marched out of her quarters carrying a kitten by its neck in her mouth. She walked very dignifiedly up the hall, and a dozen or more of the members who saw her stopped to watch.

Then the word spread, and when she had put the first kitten in the new home and started back for another there was a great crowd formed in two lines looking at her.

Then she came forth with another kitten in her teeth, and the boys gave her a cheer. This attracted the attention of everybody on the floor, and in another minute the whole crowd was formed in two lines, between which the old cat marched slowly and with impressive mien clear to the members' gallery.

The pits became deserted and trading was suspended. Every time she would appear at the south end of the line with another kitten in her mouth the boys would give her a rousing cheer, and, when she had deposited it at the other end they would cry 'Ah-hi' in chorus.

Finally her eight kittens were all moved. Then the old cat sat on the first step of the stairway and washed her face with her paws, and the boys went back and whooped up the market.

Scientific and Useful.

REMEDY FOR NOXIOUS GAS.—A single plate of perforated zinc about a foot square suspended over a gas jet is said to retain the noxious emanations from burning gas, which is known to destroy many articles in a room and to vitiate the atmosphere.

FOR BURGLARS.—Application has been made for a patent for an electric apparatus by which an instantaneous photograph is taken of a burglar. The moment he touches the door of the safe, or any other place to which the tell tale wire may be fastened, a correct photograph is taken.

WOOD PRINTING.—A new French invention, the thermographic press, is made for printing on wood by means of hot type. As neat an impression is claimed as is obtained in lithography, and by the use of a specially prepared ink it is said that cold type may be used with equally good effect. Its speed is 400 impressions an hour on flat wood.

PAPER DOORS.—Paper doors are said to be great improvements over wooden ones. They are formed of two thick paper boards, stamped and molded into panels and glazed together with glue and potash, and then rolled through heavy rollers. After being covered with a waterproof coating and one that is fire proof they are painted, varnished and hung in the usual way.

CELLULAR CLOTHING.—This material is now coming into use, and is said to be a success. It is woven out of the same material as common cloth, but into cells, the network of which is covered over with a thin stuff. Its porous quality allows the passage of the inside and outside air, giving time for the outside air to become of the same temperature as the body, and thus obviating all danger of catching colds and allowing vapors exhaled by the body to pass off. The ordinary objection to cotton underwear is removed if made in this manner.

BY ELECTRICITY.—Still another means of carrying letters and packages by electricity has been devised. A cigar-shaped car, eighteen feet long and two and one-half feet square at the ends, contains the coils and magnets, to which power enough to draw little mail and express cars at the rate of three miles a minute "up hill and down dale" is conveyed each moment along an electrical safety rail from generating stations placed at regular intervals. The track is, of course, somewhat narrower even than the cars. In thickly settled regions it is to be built on upright posts above the ground. To avoid the resistance due to the friction which always takes place between rapidly moving bodies and the air, the motor car—or engine—is pointed in front, and each succeeding car is fitted into the one just ahead. The whole train is regulated with perfect accuracy from a central station.

Farm and Garden.

TROUGHS.—Watering troughs by the roadside at convenient distances are highly appreciated by travelers, and are sure indications of kind and hospitable farmers.

THE ROSES.—There is no plant that enjoys plenty of good manure more than the roses, and a lack of this will always result in scraggy plants and miserable blooms.

BEES.—Time intelligently given to bees will pay equally well with that given to any other kind of farm work, and where too many are not kept it may be done at such times as not to interfere with other important work.

SWINE.—The belief that a hog will thrive on any kind of feed, if he has an abundance of it, and the shiftless, reckless way of feeding practiced by many is the immediate and sole cause of much of the disease that prevails among the swine.

THE MANURE HEAP.—Chloride of lime will disinfect the manure heap if the odor therefrom is disagreeable. The heap is now liable to fire-fang, and should be turned over occasionally, or it will lose in value. When handling the manure dry dirt should be added.

NO IDLENESS.—Keep the bull at work. Make him tread and give power for the hay-cutter, feed-mill and other implements. He will then keep in better condition, be more serviceable and be less liable to become ferocious. It is a waste of power to allow the bull to be idle.

PIGEONS.—Pigeons will not look at lettuce, chick-weed or other green stuff thrown down on the floor of their fly or loft, but if it is fastened securely by means of a bit of wire or cord a few inches off the floor, so the pigeon just reach it, they will help themselves to as much as is good for them.

IN HOT WEATHER.—During the day all classes of stock may be kept in a cool, dark stable with advantage if flies and other insects are numerous. The rule may interfere with turning the cows on pasture, but if flies are annoying to stock the animals will lose flesh even in the best of pastures. It is better to turn the animals on the pasture very early in the morning and late in the afternoon, keeping them confined in the stable during the heat of the day.

BECAUSE you find a thing very difficult, do not presently conclude that no man can master it; but whatever you observe proper, and practicable by another, believe likewise within your own power.

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Without Intention.

Perhaps in no respect is the perversity of human nature more clearly shown than in the vast amount of unintentional rudeness which is shown by otherwise very excellent people in the course of general conversation with friends and relatives.

That there is a distinct element of satisfaction in the delivery of an intentionally rude remark, seems universally admitted. It has doubtless been long meditated, and there is a feeling of positive relief when the duty is despatched.

The objectionable person has been duly notified of your sentiments in respect to his conduct, and you have come off possibly triumphant, the feeling of victory only checked by the hope that you have not gone too far; this sentiment, however, being entirely regulated by the importance of the person to whom we have given what in common parlance is known as "a piece of one's mind."

In all this it is easy to see a large element of that irrepressible human nature which plays so important a part in the dictation of our daily actions.

But what satisfaction can be obtained by those persons who constantly offend by chance, ill-considered remarks, ruffling all the finer feelings of those with whom they are conversing, it is difficult to understand.

The very unconsciousness with which they act in this respect is only the more irritating.

Such persons, when accused of their thoughtlessness, will invariably be found to defend their conduct by the time-worn truism, that offence should not be taken where offence is not meant.

It is perhaps to the universal acceptance among ordinary people of this argument that can be traced the very failing under discussion—the constant recurrence of remarks which, in nowise intended to be rude, as successfully ruffle the feelings of any person of sensitive organization as the most studied insult.

The remark may be a simple one, and delivered, doubtless, with a smile and with no intention of being rude; but it requires a heavy draft on one's store of good breeding to reply in that tone of politeness which society exacts.

The catalogue might be widely extended. One's errors are flaunted openly in one's face.

"I don't think much of your diplomacy," will be the remark with which a failure in the conduct of some unimportant transaction will be greeted by a grinning relative.

"You put your foot in it there!" will say another.

Who can calculate the accumulated stores of irritation caused by those thoughtless persons who seem never to remember, even after years of acquaintance, one's many little prejudices with regard to eating, drinking, sleeping, cats, dogs, burning-hot fires, open windows, draughts, babies, political opinions, and a hundred other things?

It is doubtless because it is a little troublesome to word a phrase differently from the form in which it crudely presents itself to the mind, that so many persons acquire the unfortunate habit of unintentionally offending their friends.

"Evil is wrought by want of thought, as well as want of heart."

It is not exactly want of heart which is the cause of the many thoughtless remarks that are so wounding, because these flippant rudenesses are often addressed to those who are dearly loved; but it would seem as if those who speak of their affection were not fully aware of the exactions entailed by its expression; the due consideration which such a feeling involves for the sensitiveness of others.

A little careful study of the mode in which a disagreeable remark can be made positively palatable will be found to be a most useful accomplishment.

Such a study, so far from checking, as might be supposed, that spontaneous expression of feeling which some value so highly, will be found, on the contrary, after a little, to have increased the tone and suppleness of those who practice the art, and to have become as facile a habit as the expression of the more outspoken unvarnished truth.

It is the wit and polish of the man or woman of the world which enables so many malicious little remarks to be uttered in a tone of such exquisite breeding as to render it impossible for offence to be taken.

Many are prone to pride themselves on this downright quality of genuineness, as it is regarded; but there are two sides to the question.

Of course, if by long habit they have grown so callous and unsensitive as to find that the unintentionally rude remarks of friends and acquaintances—the long list of "things one ought not to have said"—pass over without ruffling the inner nature, perhaps that is all which is required.

But to those unfortunate enough not to have acquired the enviable indifference of their less sensitive neighbors, association with their more thick skinned acquaintances is somewhat apt to prove trying.

The more a man possesses in himself, the less he needs of others, and the less they can teach him. Such supremacy of intellect leads to unsociableness. Aye, could the quality of society be compensated by quantity, it might be worth while to live in the world! Unfortunately, we find a hundred fools in the crowd to one man of understanding. The brainless will have companionship and pastime at any price. For, in solitude, when all of us are thrown upon our own resources, what a man has in himself will be made manifest.

We cannot benefit ourselves without benefiting others also. If we are cheerful, happy and well, we brighten and invigorate them; if we gain knowledge, we communicate it; if we grow strong and courageous, we afford protection and infuse courage; if we are noble and true, others breathing our spiritual atmosphere become also nobler and truer. Whether we intend it or not, we are always either helping or hurting others by our unconscious influence.

The test of true loyalty which each one may put to himself is, "Am I faithful to truth, to right, to duty, to love? Am I constant to the best methods I can find—to the highest ideas I can form?" To do this much must sometimes be resigned, just as in the ascent of a mountain many pleasant resting places must be left behind. He who is thus loyal to his best conceptions will never be disloyal to his nation or his party or his friend.

An obtuse and stolid adherence to things as they are should never be dignified by the name of loyalty. If no one changed his ideas or methods, if no one lifted his thoughts or his conduct from a lower to a higher plane, the world would stand still and stagnation would ensue.

The hearth may be piled high with fuel, but until the flame ignites it it is cold and useless. So there may be intelligence and judgment, discretion and forethought; but until the flame of love inspires their action they cannot truly help mankind. The spirit of kindliness must animate the whole being, and the mental powers must combine to guide and direct it before we can succeed in helping men and not hurting them.

One of the main points in education ought to be to form the habit of treating everything as the possible subject of a great number of questions, some of which at least must be asked and answered before the thing can be, in any true sense understood. Habit is everything; and, if the habit of asking questions arranged under certain categories could once be formed, the victory of intelligence over mental inertia would be secured.

To change vague and aimless wishes to strong and effectual desires is an important part of all improvement. It is the earnest and persevering effort to do the present duty in the best possible manner; to relax no power in its discharge, and to waste no time in lamentations over what might have been, that is the secret of all good work and the element of all progress.

To seem not to hear remarks which are intended to annoy you is a species of negative insincerity which is in many cases commendable. It disappoints and baffles the insulter and prevents a profitless war of words. Such dissimulation may be the means of preventing a breach of the peace; and the "easier way is the best" when the other way is not imperative.

The despisers of mankind—apart from the mere fools and mimics of that creed—are of two sorts. They who believe their merits neglected and unappreciated make up one class; they who receive adulation and flattery, knowing their own worthlessness, compose the other. Be sure that the coldest hearted misanthropes are ever of this last order.

What most directly and above everything else makes us happy is cheerfulness of mind, for this excellent gift is its own reward. A man may be young, well-favored, rich, honored, fortunate, but if we would ascertain whether or no he would be happy, we must first put the question, Is he cheerful?

We do not care for substitutes for what we have lost; what we want is a resurrection of our dead loves, our past joys. We feel safer and surer with what we have already experienced. The hope that is set before us in the gospel appeals to this universal human feeling.

Education is as important to the child as culture to earth. You are too wise to expect crops without planting. It is just as rational to expect improvement without education.

Incivility is not a vice of the soul, but the effect of several vices—of vanity, ignorance of duty, laziness, stupidity, distraction, contempt of others, and undue jealousy.

Be cheerful always. If in misery and pain, remember that it is a long lane that has no turning, and that when you do get to that turning you will be out of your trouble.

A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of the bards and sages.

I have heard a grave divine say that God had two dwellings—one in heaven and the other in a meek and thankful heart.

Cheerfulness is the current coin of happiness, and not, like other possessions, merely its letter of credit.

To thine own self be true; and it must follow, as night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.

Temperance is a tree that has contentment for its root and peace for its fruit.

He who asks from a friend more than he can do deserves a refusal.

The World's Happenings.

All the best English stationery stamping is now done in white or gold.

In Pomona, Cal., the lucky residents have strawberries all the year round.

A Clark county, Ohio, man aged 76 years and a girl of 17 were married recently.

Smoking during service is said to be customary in some of the rural churches in Holland.

A prisoner in a Kentucky jail attempted suicide by eating two dozen pieces of blotting paper.

Nagy Ferencz, of Barc, Hungary, claims he is 121 years old, and has used tobacco since he was 17.

A large Newfoundland dog, not many days ago, saved two Newark, N. J., boys from drowning.

A radish twenty-five and one-half inches around was exhibited the other day in a store at Winter Haven, Fla.

It is estimated that the progeny of a single pair of English sparrows for 10 years would be 275,816,985,088 birds.

The French have a custom of visiting the graveyards, where their relatives are buried, on the 1st of November.

A cat at Port Jervis digs angle worms and, after biting them into small pieces, feeds them to young canary birds.

Lucas Silva, who was a doctor in the Independance Army of Bolivia, is still alive. He has reached his 125th year.

Apache county, in Arizona, is larger than the State of Massachusetts, yet it has not a single doctor within its borders.

The Shah of Persia is reported to wear jewels valued at a million and a half dollars on his person when he is fully dressed.

In the county of London there are 65 theatres and 300 music halls, and they provide accommodation for 225,000 persons.

At Wickford, R. I., one day recently, it rained small toads for half an hour, much to the confusion and disgust of the inhabitants.

It has been computed that the average growth of the finger nail is 1-32 of an inch per week, or a little more than an inch and a half per year.

An indiscreet Brooklyn boy dropped a lighted match into an empty whisky barrel, and has since been going around with his head bandaged.

In the village of Bempton, East Yorkshire, England, a young woman, whilst in the act of throwing rice at a newly-married couple, fell backward and expired.

Between fifteen and sixteen thousand children are lost in London every year, almost all of whom are found and restored to their parents by the aid of the Metropolitan Police.

The society which has for its object the prevention of cruelty to animals in England has been in existence since 1824, and during that time has secured over 30,000 convictions.

Sixty working men and women are to visit the Paris Exposition and the industrial centres of Europe at the expense and for the benefit of a syndicate of Western newspapers.

A Kansas farmer has written to the Johnstown Bureau of Information asking that a wife be chosen for him from among the flood sufferers and sent on to his place near the town of Parsons.

A special from Paris, Ky., says: John Deaver's fine young trotting colt stuck its head through a hole in the barn and threw its feet from under itself, deliberately committing suicide. He was valued at $300.

A colored man and a white woman walking together, and each smoking a cigar, attracted no little attention in West Chester on a recent night. They were said to be husband and wife, and to have come up from Georgia to visit friends.

A sea turtle 10 feet long, 5 feet wide, and weighing 1000 pounds, was caught recently in a trap off South Harwich, Cape Cod. This monster is estimated to be fully 200 years old. The distance between its fore flippers is over 10 feet.

The whole number of officials now protected by the civil service rules is 27,507; of which number 8,213 are in the departmental service, 2,398 are in the customs service, 11,763 in the postal service, and 5,320 in the railway mail service.

It has been discovered that the ordinance which was supposed to legalize the enforced closing of saloons in Kansas City on Sunday applies only to "open saloons," and permits saloon keepers to admit their customers through the side door.

In a fight between a bull and a steer, at Richland, Wis., the former knocked the steer into an old well and jumped in after him. The well was about 18 feet deep, and it took the combined efforts of the neighborhood to get the belligerents out.

An attraction at the depot at Saratoga lately was a St. Bernard dog which weighed 200 pounds, and carried a life insurance of $2,000. Its owner, Mrs. A. G. Gordon, traveled all the way from San Francisco in the baggage car in order to take proper care of her pet, who wears a leather collar and a black ribbon.

As an advertisement for the first night of a play called "The Honeymoon," the manager of the Wallner Theatre, in Berlin, placed 100 stalls at the disposal of 50 newly-married couples, so that the occasion was graced by the presence of 50 young bridegrooms in raven-hued suits and white ties, and 50 blooming brides in myrtle wreaths and white tulle veils.

A New Hampshire man was swindled out of $300 on State street, Boston, recently, by an old bunco trick. He was accosted by a man who professed acquaintance, and, after some conversation, was induced to loan the fellow the money "for just a few moments to pay a bill." The New Hampshire man took what purported to be a check as security for the money. The stranger entered the building where his alleged creditor was and was not seen afterward.

LIFE.

BY RITA.

One balmy breath of spring
  Beauteous and bright,
One happy bird on wing
  Cleaving the light,
One note of music sweet,
One hour of joy complete,
One spot where heart strings meet,
  One summer night.

One day of battle's zest
  All anger rife,
One night of peaceful rest
  After the strife,
One voice of gleeful mirth
Springing from joy to birth,
One grass-crown mound of earth;
  Such is our life.

Silk Stockings.

BY MEHALAH.

THE brothers Heckmondwyke were the sons of a large and well-to-do manufacturer, a stocking maker, in Yorkshire. The stockings and socks and other goods in stockingette of Messrs. Heckmondwyke and Sons were known in the trade everywhere.

Old Heckmondwyke was dead, and the firm would henceforth have to be called Heckmondwyke Brothers. Of these brothers there were but two, Philip, the elder, unmarried, and Hezekiah, the younger, married.

Because Heckmondwyke the father was dead, therefore the sons wore black, and because he had died recently, the black was new, and the glazed calico backing the waistcoat of Hezekiah crackled, and was not set in formal furrows.

In consequence of the death of their father and the factory being left equally between the brothers, some consultation and arrangement between them had been necessary.

There had been no hitch, no ruffle of spirit, in the administration of their father's affairs and disposal of his estate. Everything had been left to the brothers to divide equally, where division was necessary, to keep together where partnership was advisable.

The house in which old Mr. Heckmondwyke had lived was that in which he had been born. It did not adjoin the factory, it was some way from it. It was one in a crescent, Wentworth Crescent, No. 1.

As he had met with annoyance from a neighbor in No. 2, Mr. Heckmondwyke had seized the occasion of the neighbor's leaving to buy that house, and for some time it remained empty, because he preferred having no neighbor near him, that is, shoulder to shoulder.

His former neighbor had three daughters who practised on the piano all the evening, and he would not run the risk of having inhabitants next door who might irritate his nerves by strumming.

Finally, when his younger son Hezekiah married, he allowed him to enter and inhabit No. 2; he calculated that many years would elapse before piano practice would be a nuisance to him again, for in the event of a daughter being born, the child would not learn the piano till it was six or seven, and then would only play on it in the mornings, when he, her grandfather, would be at the factory.

The child was born, a little girl, but was not old enough as yet to meddle with music. Penelope Laetitia was her name.

She was still in the nursery at the top of the house, and her only instrument was a silver coral with bells, the present of her godfather, her uncle, Philip Heckmondwyke.

Philip had remained with his father in No. 1 Wentworth Crescent when Hezekiah moved into No. 2

When the brothers came to consider the partition of their father's property into equal halves, then it had been settled between them that Philip, as the elder, and as in possession, should remain in No. 1, and that Hezekiah, with wife and child should remain in No. 2.

"Unless, brother," said Hezekiah, "you could be persuaded to live with us. I am sure you would be more comfortable, and Bessie" (his wife) "is very much attached to you."

Philip shook his head.

"It is kind of you to offer this, Hez, but I am a confirmed old bachelor. I like to have my own way in everything, and to have everything in the house go by clockwork. With a wife this is not always possible nor desirable."

"Then you will look on my house as your home. You keep a latch key to No. 2 and run in and out as you like. There will always be a cover for you at dinner and an arm chair by the fire."

"Thank you kindly, Hez. I accept the key, and will use it as you desire."

Madam Heckmondwyke, the great-grandmother of the brothers Philip and Hezekiah, had been a personage in her day—a daughter of a small country Yorkshire squire, who had married a man beneath her in station, who owned a few looms and let work to cottagers possessing looms of their own.

In former days, in the dales of the western hills were whole colonies of weavers; every cottager aspired to own a loom, saved his wages to buy or build one, and when he possessed one, took contracts from bigger men.

These bigger men took the great contracts and let out the work piece-meal to the cottagers. Any one passing through a village heard the rattle of looms out of every door and window, and even on the wild moors, where a lonely hovel stood, there also sounded the busy shuttle.

It was thought a great disgrace to the family of the Holroyds, when Penelope Laetitia married the manufacturer Heckmondwyke; but since that marriage the Holroyds had gone down and had disappeared, and the Heckmondwykes had gone up and gained consequence.

Piece by piece had the encumbered estate of the Holroyds passed from them, and piece by piece had the fortune of the Heckmondwykes improved.

Penelope Laetitia had brought with her no dower, nothing but herself, her Christian name, and her silk stockings, when she married Joseph Heckmondwyke, nevertheless her sons and grandson and great-grandsons looked back on that marriage as the making of them; they were able to give themselves some airs as not altogether new people, but a family with one root in the county soil, and therefore with a claim to position above their fellows.

Penelope Laetitia had possessed a pair of very beautiful purple silk stockings, with clocks of white at the sides, elaborate and delicate in pattern, and these stockings had somehow remained in the family after she herself had mouldered into dust.

The Holroyd estates had been alienated and broken up; the Holroyd family portraits had been dispersed, but Miss Holroyd's purple stockings remained a hundred years after she had worn them, very little the worse for wear, for they had been so choice and beautiful that she had only worn them on grand occasions, and as after she married Joe Heckmondwyke no grandeur came about, she wore them no more.

The family grew to regard this pair of stockings as an heirloom, an interesting relic of the family history, a link by which it attached itself to the Holroyds.

This pair of silk stockings it was which gave direction to the special manufacture of the Heckmondwyke house.

Old Joe Heckmondwyke had not been a stocking maker, the stocking looms were introduced by his grandson, Philip Holroyd Heckmondwyke, the father of Philip and Hezekiah, and his firm ran hard some of the Nottingham houses.

Penelope Laetitia, Holroyd's mother had been a Miss Lee, and the Lees prided themselves as having produced the inventor of the stocking loom.

When Penelope Laetitia was born, a Nottinghamshire Lee was invited to stand godfather to the child, and instead of presenting her with a silver mug or a coral, or a silver spoon or fork, he gave her a pair of purple stockings, a miracle of perfection, so fine was the texture and so delicate and beautiful the clocking, that the child might when grown up not forget that she descended from the Lees who invented and created the stocking loom and its industry.

Now the Heckmondwykes had come to think there was something aristocratic about the stocking loom as opposed to the plebeian common loom, and as they began to rise, they became ambitious to start a stocking manufacture in Yorkshire, and show that they also inherited something of the Lees as well as those in Nottinghamshire.

Philip Holroyd Heckmondwyke obtained the requisite looms and induced some Nottingham weavers to come to him, and the Yorkshire manufacture took root and prospered, prospered so well that not even Nottingham stockings commanded such a sale as the Yorkshire stockings of Heckmondwyke and Sons.

We have said that the brothers Heckmondwyke were Philip and Hezekiah, but that was only their first names, as Heckmondwyke is so long a surname we spared the reader their names in full, but we must now give them, the elder was Philip Holroyd, like his father, and the younger was Hezekiah Lee, and because a Lee he considered it his right to keep possession of the stockings.

Philip was equally determined to keep them. On a certain occasion they met in Hezekiah's house and came to strong words over the matter.

"You have our great-grandmother's pair of silk stockings here in No. 2, I know," said Philip. "I remember your sending for them, you wanted to show them to your sister-in-law when she was with you."

"Umph."

"Really, brother, you might answer me."

"I do not want to part with the stockings."

"But," said Phil, "I do not desire to yield them up."

"Why not? They are no good to you."

"Of what possible use can they be to you?"

"They are of interest to my womankind."

"But they are heirlooms in our family, and should be in my hands, as the eldest, and head of the Heckmondwyke family."

"Nonsense. You are a bachelor."

"Well—and you have no son."

"If you had them," said Hezekiah, "no one would see them. You would keep them locked up, and they might as well be non-existent."

"I object to their being pawed by every Jack and Tom, and Jill and Jenny."

"I do not admit into my social circle Jacks and Toms, and Jills and Jennys," said Hezekiah sternly; "will you leave me?"

"I can hardly go till something is settled about those stockings."

"I do not want to part with them."

"Hezekiah," said Philip raising himself to his full height, and speaking with constrained indignation, "I insist on the surrender of those stockings."

"What would you have?" asked Hezekiah sarcastically. "Divide the stockings?"

"Nonsense, how could they be divided and be a pair?"

"Oh," sneered the younger, "with a pair of shears you could cut them across, and you take the feet and I the rest."

"Or you take one and I the other," added Philip. "No, I will consent to no such compromise. If I did, I should rightly forfeit my claim to them, like the woman before the throne of judgment of Solomon."

"I will not give them up. It is absurd of you to want them. They will descend from me to my daughter, who is a Penelope Laetitia like her great-grandmother."

"Is that your deliberate answer?"

"It is."

"Then you are fraudulent."

"You are grasping, avaricious."

"There is the latch-key. The question must be settled before we meet again—amicably."

Hezekiah rang the bell. "Show out Mr. Philip," he said to the servant.

"It really is absurd," said Mrs. Heckmondwyke, "really too childish to quarrel about a pair of stockings. Let Philip have them."

"My dear Bessie," answered Hezekiah, "you look on this matter from a Scholey point of view"—Mrs. Heckmondwyke had been a Miss Scholey—"and not from that commanding platform whence we who are the descendants and representatives of the Holroyds contemplate these stockings. As a Lee I am resolved to retain them. Besides——"

"My dear Hez, why quarrel about them?"

"I do not quarrel, it is Philip who quarrels with me. He is exacting, and demands these stockings as a right."

"Perhaps he has a right to them."

"Not at all. Possession is nine points of the law. Besides, he has insulted me."

"Was either of you constituted residuary legatee by the will? If so, that should decide the matter."

"Neither was. Everything was left to us equally, except such things as we chose to divide."

"Then divide the stockings."

"We neither of us choose to do this. A pair constitutes a complete and perfect article. Neither Philip nor I would allow of this separation into individual stockings. They must go together and so constitute a pair. If neither will hear of the separation, then such an arrangement as you propose is inadmissible."

A few days after this Hezekiah received the following letter from his brother:

"It is quite impossible for the matter of the stockings to remain unsettled. I cannot sit down composedly to acquiescence in your retention of what by right of seniority belongs to me. I am loth to bring the matter into court because the public, which knows nothing about the importance and value of the articles under dispute, might choose to laugh at us for contesting the proprietorship of a something to which the vulgar mind attaches no value. Nevertheless I am determined to enforce my right by process of law. To give the matter a color which will justify it to the public, I propose that each of us, you and myself, should contribute an equal sum of money, say seven hundred and fifty pounds, towards the purchase of a set of diamonds, which we will regard as having belonged to our great-grandmother, and we will contest the right to this set, which each will refuse to see divided, and he who obtains by award of the court the set of jewels, he also by mutual consent shall have the stockings."

A strange and puzzling proposition. Hezekiah saw that the world would view a contest between him and his brother, for a pair of stockings in much the same light as did his own wife.

The world had not that fineness of sentiment, that clinging to the past which he possessed, and so would be unable to estimate the value of the contested article aright.

If he and Philip were to engage in a legal contest together, it would be as well that they should ostensibly fight over something the gross world would consider of real worth.

But Hezekiah hesitated about accepting his brother's proposal. How would it be if there was to be cross-examination as to the date of acquisition of the set of jewelry?

He could not on oath declare it had belonged to his great-grandmother. But then—he further considered—was it likely that such questions would be put?

He and his brother would appear in court disputing with each other the possession of a set of diamonds and other valuables that both he and his brother recognised as heirlooms from that great-grandmother. The point at law would be to whom the diamonds were to be adjudged, not when they had been acquired.

He further argued that if—as was certain—the case would be given in his favor, he would acquire not only indisputable possession of the stockings, but also of a set of precious stones worth fifteen hundred pounds.

It really was a chance not to be passed over. His right to the stockings was obvious. They had been sent over to his house by his father without a word as to his having to return them; and he could therefore assume, yea, assert, even swear that they had been given him by his father.

Naturally, the jewels would mentally stand for stockings, and what each brother swore concerning the jewels would refer by tacit understanding to the object of real litigation.

A few days later, after dinner, Mrs. Heckmondwyke reverted to the subject of dispute.

"My dear, we have not seen Philip for some time. Why does he not drop in on us as of old? Is it because of that pair of stockings? Upon my word I will burn them, if I come across them, it is monstrous, it is positively ridiculous, that two middle-aged men should quarrel about such a trifle."

"Bessie, you know nothing about the circumstances. You have heard of the purple stockings, but not of the diamonds."

"Diamonds, Hez!"

Mrs. Heckmondwyke started in her chair as if she had been electrified.

"I will show you the necklace," said her husband. "The necklace and stockings go together. He who gets the one gets also the other. The diamonds are said to be worth fifteen hundred pounds."

"My dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Heckmondwyke when the precious stones were shown her, sparkling in the gaslight. "Do you mean to tell me that Philip demands these? An old bachelor such as he! Oh, my dear Hez, promise me you will not give way. Oh, I hope—no unworthy attachment! Oh, Hez! as you respect your ancestress, save them from profanation! Oh, Hez, do look how they become me!"

"Yes," said Hezekiah to himself, "I can with a clean conscience swear that the diamonds, I mean the stockings belong to me, were given to me by my father. I recall the circumstances minutely. After dinner I was talking about them to Bessie's sister, and she expressed a wish to see them. I wrote to father, and I remember distinctly the wording of that note, it was, 'Dear Gov., may I have those valuables of my

great-grandmother?' And he sent them over in reply to my note. May I have—I asked and he sent them, what was that but a gift?"

"Yes," said Philip to himself, "I can with clear conscience swear that the diamonds, I mean the stockings, were only lent to Hezekiah by my father. I have found the note in which my brother asked for them. Father never destroyed any letters. In that note, Hezekiah wrote 'Dear Gov., may I have those valuables of my great-grandmother's? Bessie's sister Louisa is with us, and would like to see them.' Distinctly he asked only for a temporary loan. Bessie's sister Louisa was there, and desired to see them. That they should be returned when they had been shown, is implied. The case is clear as day."

Thus began the case of Heckmondwyke versus Heckmondwyke, a case which was not ended in a twelvemonth, no, nor in two.

It was a long time before the case could be floated, it stuck on the rollers, it would not move, and when finally it was run down and launched, it stuck in the mud, and had to wait a suitable, but hardly tide to lift it, and get it under way, and when really afloat, showed a want of balance and a tendency to keel over, and was considered by lawyers one of the most curious, confused, but profitable cases with which they had had the good fortune to be engaged.

At the back of the Crescent were gardens divided from each other by brick walls; each house in the Crescent had its garden.

They were not very extensive, but they served as places where the inmates of the house could amuse themselves with little feats, such as keeping poultry, or growing flowers, or where, if there were children, the little ones could romp with impunity.

As Penelope Laetitia grew older she was allowed to play unrestrainedly in the garden of No 1. Sometimes she had little friends to play with her, and the small garden resounded with the sparkling, happy voices of children.

On such occasions, occasionally, a face was seen rising above the wall that divided No. 1 from No. 2. The face was that of uncle Philip, it was stern.

He called out, "Hush! what a noise you children are making. Which of you is Penelope Laetitia? Oh—you. You step forward. You are making more noise than the rest. It is intolerable that out of work time I cannot stroll in my garden without being disturbed. Laetitia, I am angry. I will complain to the police."

Then the head disappeared again.

In fact Philip Heckmondwyke had ascended a ladder that he might be able to look over the wall and rebuke his niece.

When Hezekiah heard this, he also got a ladder, set it against the wall, ran up it, and shouted, 'Complain to the police if you like. My child shall shout and laugh as she chooses, in total disregard of her sour, crabbed and avaricious uncle Philip."

Philip Heckmondwyke was fond of his little bit of garden. He had a small conservatory in it, which was heated by a pipe that passed from the kitchen boiler.

In this conservatory he kept such flowers as were half hardy, primulas, azaleas, cinerarias, and he was able to force on a few bulbs a month in advance of those out-of-doors.

He did not concern himself greatly about his plants, but he liked to potter about in his glass-house at moments of leisure, and to smoke his cigars there under the cinerarias and calceolarias to disestablish the green fly.

The great treasure of the conservatory was a Marechal Niel rose, which bore in one summer as many as one hundred and seventeen blooms.

At the end of the garden Philip had a summer-house, and there he was fond of sitting of a warm evening with a bottle of claret, reading his paper and smoking.

During the summer that followed the quarrel with his brother, he could hear, as he thus sat, the voice of the child in the adjoining garden come to him over the wall, the laugh so full of merriment, so prolonged that presently Philip's muscles relaxed and a smile came upon his grim face.

What was making the little creature laugh so? a deaf person is distressed when he sees a company explode with mirth, and he does not rest till the joke has been spouted into his ear-trumpet.

Philip felt like a deaf man on such an occasion. Fun was going on and provoking laughter, but what the fun was he could not guess.

It was no ordinary joke, for the child continued to laugh for a long time, in shrill, convulsive peals.

It lasted so long, died away only for a minute, and then broke out with such renewed energy, that Philip's smile died away, and was replaced by an expression of concern. He recalled the story of a man who had five wives in succession and the secret of the death of his wives was that he tickled them to death.

Those who passed the house at night heard laughter, and thought that the married life within was a happy one. Actually the poor woman was strapped down to a bed, and the husband played with a feather on the soles of her feet.

In the morning she was dead, and not a token of violence was on her, not a trace of poison found in her, at a post mortem examination.

Was it possible that some nurse was barbarously tickling Penelope Laetitia? Perhaps only inconsiderately, but likely, unless stopped, to lead to serious if not fatal results.

Philip Heckmondwyke felt as though cold water were being poured down his back, when this thought came over him. He rose from his table in the arbor, ran for a ladder, set it against the wall that divided the gardens, ascended it, and looked over.

He saw that the little child was running about, was not being tickled, but was trying to tickle her nurse, who dodged from her, ran a little way, pretended to hide behind a laburnum-tree or syringa bush, and allowed herself to be caught and tickled by the fairy-like child, a dear little thing with fair curls in a white dress with red stockings and a red sash, and cheeks almost as deep in color as her sash.

Philip leaned both his elbows on the wall top and watched the game awhile, then he descended, went to his conservatory and picked one or two Marechal Niel roses, came back panting, ran up the ladder and dexterously threw them so that they fell before the child. Then he bobbed his head below the wall, crept down the ladder, removed it, and returned to his place in the arbor.

That same day Mr. Hezekiah observed the roses—his little daughter had brought them to her mother. He observed them because, previous to the rupture between the brothers, in the time of roses, his drawing-room and dinner-table had been kept plentifully supplied with Marechal Niel blooms, since the rupture he had seen none.

"Whence comes the rose?" he asked sharply.

"Penelope says it fell down before her, whilst she was playing," answered Mrs. Heckmondwyke.

"Playing, playing, where?"

"In the garden."

"How came it to fall before her?"

"How can I tell, Hez?"

"My dear, roses don't drop out of heaven."

"But Penelope is such a dear, that even angels——"

"Fudge! There are no Marechal Niels in heaven."

"How else could they have fallen?"

"Umph! the roses grow in the conservatory of No. 2."

"But they could not have come of themselves over the wall."

"If I thought that—but no, it is impossible—and yet, I have a mind to ask an explanation of Philip."

A day or two later some more roses came over the wall. On this occasion the child had seen the face of her uncle rising above the wall, and had seen him throw the flowers.

When Hezekiah heard this he sent the blossoms back in a cardboard box with a letter to this effect:

"Mr. Hezekiah Heckmondwyke objects emphatically to Mr. Philip Heckmondwyke giving roses or anything else to his child, so long as he maintains his arrogant pretensions to the valuables of Penelope Laetitia, deceased."

To this came an answer couched in these terms:

"Mr. Heckmondwyke is surprised at the temerity of Mr. Hezekiah Heckmondwyke addressing him, so long as he retains in his hands articles of value that properly, and as will speedily be shown, legally belong to Mr. Heckmondwyke. Mr Heckmondwyke reserves to himself the right of throwing over his wall, any old, mildewed, faded, maggot eaten, green-fly covered, worthless plants that encumber his greenhouse or garden."

This answer made the younger brother very angry. He sent for a mason and gave orders that the wall should be raised four feet, between his garden and that of his neighbor.

"Please, sir," said the mason, "we must put a scaffold on t'other side as well as this; there must be a second bricklayer in the garden of No. 2 to work ekall to the bricklayer on this side, in the garden of No. 1."

"That cannot be," answered Mr. Hezekiah, "you must manage to build the wall entirely from my side."

"It'll leave the other side very untidy."

"The untidier the better," said Mr. Hezekiah. So the wall was begun.

"My dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Hezekiah Heckmondwyke "whatever are you doing? You will cut off all the light from the dining-room. We get little enough sunlight there now, and if this wall be carried four feet higher, we shall get none at all."

"My dear Bessie," answered her husband; "I am sorry for the inconvenience, but it is inevitable. My brother persists in throwing his rubbish into our garden and I will not have it."

"What rubbish?"

"His old withered roses."

"My dear, he has thrown quite young buds."

"I don't care. He shall throw nothing there," answered Hezekiah. "I hope and trust the wall will darken his dining-room as it darkens ours; the hope makes me bear the inconvenience with a light heart."

The raising of the wall provoked fresh trouble. A wall between two buildings belongs equally to both proprietors and has to be maintained in repair by both.

For one to raise the wall so as to exclude light from the other is an excess of right, and immediately a letter came to Mr. Hezekiah from the solicitor for his brother requiring him to remove the bricks that had been placed on the wall, and reduce it to its previous height.

This Hezekiah refused to do. He asserted that he was constrained to raise the wall in self-defence, as his next door neighbor was employing his garden ground as a place for the casting of his rubbish.

As he did not cease from building, Philip moved for an injunction to enforce stayment of proceeding. So the scaffold was left and the heap of mortar, and piles of bricks, in Hezekiah's garden awaiting the decision of the court.

The bricklayer had, in the meantime disfigured his garden, trampled on the beds, bespattered the turf with mortar, slited the lime on his premises and sent a cloud in at his windows, had chipped and broken the bricks, sending splinters in all directions over the grass and upon the walks, and bestrewed the beds.

"My dear," exclaimed Bessie Heckmondwyke one day, "where is Penelope Laetitia?"

"In the garden."

"Any one with her?"

"No, the nurse is laid up with a bad headache."

Mrs. Heckmondwyke went to the window and uttered a cry of horror.

"What is the matter?" asked her husband, starting forward.

"Hez! oh Hez! quick! What is to be done? The child is on the top of the wall."

That same afternoon, Philip Heckmondwyke had had been seated in his arbor, smoking. His eyes rested on the wall. The old mellow red brick, stained with lichen, and dappled with moss, rose from his garden bed to the height of ten feet. Above that was the raw scarlet of the new brick, of which several courses were laid, and in part the new addition had been completed.

"Abominable!" exclaimed Philip. "Outrageous! An eyesore! My brother must be taught a lesson, and he will have to pull down every brick that has been laid. Legally he has not a leg to stand on. What is that?"

Over the wall flew a child's ball, scarlet, blue, yellow, and green, and bounced against the steps of the summer-house.

"Hah!" said Philip. "That child has done this. She must be taught a lesson. I will not throw this ball over. She must learn to be more careful."

He took up the ball and turned it about, and put it on the table where stood his bottle of claret and glass.

Presently he thought, "Poor little creature, she will be crying because she has lost her ball. I think after all I will throw it back over the wall."

Then he came out of the arbor carrying the ball, but stood petrified with horror to see that the little girl had got up on one of the masons' ladders and was on the wall, standing looking down into Philip's garden for the ball.

When Philip recovered from the shock of seeing her, he called out, "Penelope, sit down, sit down. Wait till I bring you the ball. I have it. Sit down, do not be afraid."

The child obeyed, and one little purple leg hung down on Philip's side of the wall—purple the legs were, with white clocks on the stockings.

Philip ran to where was a garden ladder, and brought it to the spot, planted it against the wall, and began to ascend it, speaking encouragingly to the little girl who looked down at him and then turned her head and looked down into her father's garden, and one purple leg with white clocks on the stocking depended on that side also.

Mr. Hezekiah Heckmondwyke, as soon as he saw from the window the perilous situation of his child, ran down stairs, and without his hat flew into the garden and ascended the ladder.

"Penelope," he said, "sit quiet, do not stir. For goodness' sake do not lose your head. Shut your eyes and wait till I lay hold of you."

The child however did not seem at all afraid; she looked laughingly from her father on one side to her uncle on the other.

Simultaneously each seized her by the ankle.

"Don't be afraid! Don't stir! I have the ball," said Philip.

"Keep still, I will lift you down," said her father.

Each mounted a step, then cautiously another, then each suddenly put an arm round the child, and unexpectedly both faces met over the top of the wall in front of the child.

"Your ladder is too upright, you will be unable to carry Penelope down," said Philip, after the first recoil of surprise.

"Your ladder is too weak, it will not support the double weight," said Hezekiah, when he had recovered himself from the shock of almost knocking noses with his brother and adversary.

"I seized her first," said Philip.

"She is my child," answered Hezekiah.

"Let go, I know you will fall with her," exclaimed Philip. "You shall have our great-grandmother's valuables if you will let me carry her down on my side."

"Let go, Philip," cried the excited father. "She is my child, you shall have the diamonds and the stockings if you will release your hold."

"I will not let go," answered Philip. "She is my niece."

"I will summon you if you do not," shouted Hezekiah.

"I will give evidence against you if she is hurt," exclaimed Philip. Then with an effort he lifted himself upon the wall, and sat there holding the child.

"Now, Hezekiah," said he, "I will submit to a compromise. "You descend, set the ladder at a less acute angle, fetch a second, and we will together carry Penelope down into your garden."

When Penelope Laetitia had been safely conveyed to the ground in the arms of her uncle and father, then the two men stood and drew a long breath.

"That wall——" said Hezekiah.

"Exactly, that wall——" said Philip.

"That wall shall not be raised any higher," said Hezekiah.

"I shall never again look on that wall without a shudder."

"Uncle," said the child, "may I have my ball?"

"Here it is," said he, and he stooped and kissed his niece.

Hezekiah was moved.

"Yes," said Hezekiah, "I will have all the bricks removed."

"All?"

"Yes, all."

"Then," said Philip, "there will be a double space for Penelope Laetitia to run about in."

"I—I did not mean all the bricks."

"You said all. Why not? Level the whole wall."

Then Mrs. Heckmondwyke said in the pause that ensued, "I have a proposal to make. Let the valuables, diamonds and stockings be made over by both of you, father and uncle to Penelope Laetitia. She will be the representative of the family, and she is the only one likely to wear the diamonds."

"On one condition," said Philip, "that when she marries, her husband shall take the name of Holroyd."

"And Lee," put in Hezekiah.

"It shall be a deed of gift," said Philip. "Come along, brother, to the lawyer's office. It shall be drawn out at once."

"And you shall have the latch-key again."

"I shall not require it when the wall is pulled down."

Rose Raymer.

BY L. C.

"I'm awfully sorry, my darling!" and the young squire of Morewood drew his betrothed closer to him, and kissed away the tears that were filling her eyes. "It's happened most unfortunately; but you do not blame me, do you?"

"Blame you?" echoed Celia Anstey, promptly. "Oh, no, no. How could I be so unjust? Of course it cannot be helped; only—only——"

He finished the sentence for her.

"Only it's very provoking that, just as I have induced you to come here, to be introduced to my mother and sister, and make acquaintance with your home that is to be, I should be called away. I had planned a score of delightful walks and drives and now they must all be postponed. Not," he added, "but what I hope to return to you in two or three days at the farthest."

"Three days!" and Celia looked aghast.

She was a timid, nervous little creature; and though her reception at Morewood Hall had been a flattering one, she had not overcome her dread of the stately Lady Mary, her lover's mother, and the pale, melancholy young widow, Lady Mary's only daughter, who had not yet recovered from the shock of suddenly losing her husband and two children, stricken down with Indian fever.

To be left alone with these sad, silent women, or to wander *solus* about the great rooms of a mansion so large that she lost herself if she ventured to stir without Hartley's guidance, would be a trying ordeal, and Celia summoned up courage to protest against it.

"It's no use pretending to deny that I shall feel horribly forlorn without you. Indeed, I had better go back to my aunt's. I think I should prefer it."

"But, my love," in his turn the squire remonstrated, "there is my mother to be considered. She would be very much hurt, as well as surprised, if you were to run away from her like a frightened child from an ogress."

"No, I am quite sure you meant nothing unkind to her," he added, as Celia gave him a deprecating look. "And you will stay, if only to oblige me. Think how much we have to settle before I call on the workmen who are to renovate the wing of the house that is to be yours. I mean to make my home worthy of my fair bride, and shall want your opinion on five hundred and fifty matters connected with our alterations and improvements.

"Remember, too," for Celia still looked unconvinced, "remember that although I am compelled to put in an appearance at the law courts by eleven o'clock to-morrow morning, there is nothing to keep me in town as soon as the case has been heard."

"And will it be heard directly?"

"I hope so."

But the young man was forced to admit the unpleasant possibility of its being crowded out by more important ones, which would result in his detention for another day, or even more.

"It is very tiresome," sighed Celia, who felt that she could have borne the separation far better anywhere than at Morewood Hall.

"Very," Hartley More assented. "Because a litigious fellow chooses to pick a quarrel with our local authorities over some question of right of way, I am subpœnaed to give evidence, and dragged from my home against my will! Pity me, my Celia, and don't—pray don't—make my vexation greater by running away from us!"

Thus adjured, how could she refuse to stay quietly with Lady Mary till he could return!

For her consent she was thanked, and

praise, and caressed, the ardent lover forming all sorts of plans to make the time of his absence pass quickly.

"My mother shall take you into Birmingham to-morrow to select some new furniture for the room that is to be your boudoir; and lest I should not arrive till late, you shall invite the rector's daughters to fulfil their promise, and teach you to play lawn-tennis. On Thursday, if all goes well, I shall myself escort you to our local flower show, to rival the roses with these blushing cheeks. Should I be detained—which the gods forbid!—still go, my dearest. I shall not be missed, if my Celia lends them the light of her presence."

Then another thought crossed Hartley's mind.

These arrangements, at which Celia pouted, asking how she could enjoy any other society while deprived of his, provided certainly for the afternoons and evenings of each succeeding day; but during the long mornings which Lady Mary invariably spent with her daughter, who did not rise till noon, how would the lonely guest amuse herself?

But this question she scouted as unnecessary.

"Do not talk as if I had no resources of my own!" she cried, shaking her finger at him. "Have I not my pencil and color-box? And did I not pledge myself before I left home that I would carry back with me to my near old aunts at least one faithful picture of Morewood Hall? I must keep that promise, and I have already seen half-a-dozen exquisite little bits of scenery on which I long to try my hand.

"While you are beside me," she added softly, "my happiness makes me idle; but when you are gone, the hope of giving pleasure to you as well as my aunts shall make me busy. Who knows but that I may astonish you, monsieur, with the amount of work I shall get through while you are in London?"

Now, Celia was a born artist, and Hartley More was proud of her talents.

He applauded the idea, and suggested as one of the subjects for her sketches a charming lakelet at no great distance from the house.

Celia smiled acquiescence.

"If I can do it justice I will, and I have also a great desire to sketch in water-colors that picturesque cottage we passed while driving yesterday. There was a delightful old woman in the porch knitting! Will she consent to sit to me, I wonder."

Hartley More's face clouded a little, and there was some constraint in his tones as he expressed a fear that granny Werner's cottage was at an inconvenient distance.

"You think so?" queried Celia, who did not feel disposed to relinquish her intention. "And yet I am a very good walker, as you are aware."

"I should prefer to see what you can make of that clump of beeches," said Hartley, ignoring her remark. "And there is the church; you could not have a better subject for your pencil than its old Norman tower. But I hope to return to you before you have spoiled your first sheet of paper."

If never, this hope was doomed to be frustrated.

The case in which Hartley More's evidence was required lingered on in spite of his impatience, and he was detained in London for five of the longest, most tedious days he had ever endured.

While he was fuming and fretting in the chilly halls and corridors of the law courts, with no other consolation than writing budgets to his betrothed, or selecting jewelry and books for her, Celia herself was striving to keep dulness at bay by hard work.

Lady Mary pronounced her a sweet little thing because she came to the breakfast-table punctually, answered cheerfully the few languid remarks made during the meal, and then went away till the luncheon bell rang, giving her hostess no further trouble.

"It was so nice," her ladyship said, "to have someone in the house who did not want amusing!"

If she had been inclined to marvel at dear Hartley's choice, seeing that Celia was an orphan who had been reared by a couple of commonplace maiden aunts in straitened circumstances, she certainly could not regret it.

The dear child was so amiable, so capable, and would take so much trouble off her hands, that she was delighted with her!

As a fact, Celia was not as unhappy as she had expected to be.

Hartley's letters were all that the most exacting maiden could desire; there was much to see and admire in the old Hall, and the housekeeper was eager to display its treasures to her future mistress; and last but not least, she was bent on producing some sketches that would satisfy even that most severe critic to whom she had ever submitted them, Hartley More himself.

"I am not satisfied with this!" she exclaimed, pushing from her a view of the lakelet, on which she had spent much pains. "I am sure I could do better with that delicious old tumble-down cottage and its old woman. Tell me, Mrs. Smith, how far is it to granny Werner's?"

The housekeeper hesitated and looked dubious.

"There is a near cut across the park and out at the west lodge, but I wouldn't go there if I were you, miss. Granny's a queer body sometimes, and——"

"And what? Pray finish what you were saying! Is she reputed as a witch?"

"That's just it, mem," Mrs. Smith responded. "Not that I take any account of such silly superstitions, but the old woman is odd, there's no denying it. And her place is dreadfully out of repair. If you've a fancy for drawing houses—there's the bailiff's close, handy, spick-and-span new, and would make a pretty picture, I've no doubt."

Celia smiled, promised to go and look at the bailiff's cottage as Mrs. Smith advised; then tucking her sketch-book under her arm, did as wilful woman generally does—set all objections at nought and struck into the path that led across Morewood Park to the west lodge and granny Werner's dilapidated dwelling.

It was a charming walk, and two or three ideas for landscapes were dashed into the young lady's book, to be elaborated at some future time.

One of the rosy children of the lodge-keeper winningly acted as her guide to granny Werner's, and granny herself, sitting just within her cottage door, smiled a welcome as soon as she caught sight of her visitor.

She was not alone. A girl about eighteen, who had one of the prettiest yet most melancholy faces Celia had ever seen, was sitting at granny's feet, resting her head against the knees of the aged woman, whose wrinkled hand was smoothing her soft fair hair.

But this young creature, after one startled glance at Miss Anstey, sprang away, to be seen no more, though once or twice during Celia's stay in the cottage she fancied she could hear the sound of stifled sobbing.

Granny Werner was very deaf, so it was rather a difficult task to make her understand the nature of her visitor's errand; but when she been made to understand it, she was much flattered and laughed feebly.

"Dearie me, I'd never thought I'd be axed to put myself in a plater. What'll I look like? Maybe I shan't live to see, for it mun be slow work to make them niggling little marks and dots on a bit o' paper. It's unbeknowns to me how you does it. Yes, I'll sit for yo, missie, but how if I go'n to sleep? I can't do without my naps, and a many of them, for I'm in my eighty-eighth year, that I be."

When reassured on this point, she permitted Celia to pose her, and watched with much amusement the fair artist's proceedings.

"I hope I have not frightened your grand-daughter away," Miss Anstey observed, when her model began to show signs of fatigue.

"Eh? I've no grand-daughter. 'Twas only Rose Raymer; she were a-ways found o' me, poor soul!" the old woman answered, sleepily; rousing up, however to mumble thanks for the half-crown Celia put in her hand, with the promise of another on the morrow, when she proposed repeating her visit.

Aware that she would not be able to secure many sittings, Celia rose early the following morning and worked hard at her sketch till the bell in the turret above the porch summoned her to the breakfast table.

She had to take that meal alone, Lady Mary's maid appearing with an apology.

Her mistress had spent the greater part of the night in attendance upon her daughter, who had been seized with one of the nervous attacks to which she was unfortunately subject.

Celia expressed the proper amount of regret but in her heart she was not spared the necessity of sitting stiffly upright and saying "yes" and "no" to Lady Mary's few remarks.

Left alone, she was free to lounge over her coffee, reading Hartley's letter, or pressing it to her lips, or lingering with tender smiles and blushes over some passionate expression of vexation that the affairs of other men should keep him away from her.

But the weather forecasts presaged a change. She must make the most of this sunny morning if she would finish her sketch of granny Werner; and away she went in haste, to find, as before, Rose Raymer in the cottage with the old woman.

Again the girl fled at her approach, but not quickly enough to prevent Celia descrying that her pale, sad, but very beautiful face, was bathed in tears.

She was evidently in great trouble. Might it not be possible to befriend her? Hartley More was rich and generous, and though this cottage was not on his estate, his betrothed felt certain that he would readily listen to her entreaties and assist its inmates.

As soon, therefore, as an opportunity presented, she laid down her brushes, and leaning over the old woman, asked her the cause of Rose Raymer's distress.

Granny was more deaf than usual this morning, and it was some time before she could be made to understand the drift of these questions. When she did, she began to eye the young lady suspiciously.

"Who be you that axes me about Rose's trouble? Be you not proud sister of his that did me mind" (remember) "who she was, and that I was little better than a pauper?"

"My name is Anstey," Celia told her, and I am staying at Morewood Hall."

"Then you're in a sad place, and mixing wi' a bad lot!" was the astounding response. "Don't tell me that because the squire's a gentleman and Rose only a poor man's lass, he ain't bound by the promises he's made her! She's a good girl, and a modest one, and he's no right to break her heart that he may marry someone else!"

"Hartley More has not done that!" cried Celia, indignantly. "He is incapable of such baseness!"

"But he has done it," retorted the old woman, striking the ground with her crutch-stick. "Everyone in and about the place know how he has come night after night, courting Rose Raymer, and pretending to make her his wedded wife. The more shame to him for deserting her as soon as another as was prettier and better off came in his way."

Celia clasped her hands across her brow, now blistered and horrified. Could there be any truth in this story? Was it his dread lest it should reach her ears that made Hartley object to her visiting the cottage? Was it this same reason that prompted the housekeeper to throw obstacles in her way?

Again she bent over the old woman, who was crossly muttering to herself.

"Is this true that you are telling me?—true that Hartley More has led Rose Raymer to believe that she should be his wife?

"True as gospel!" replied the old woman, emphatically; and Celia waited to hear no more.

Haunted, goaded by the woeful looks of the unhappy girl, whose history she had just heard, she fled the cottage.

But where should she go? Not back to the Hall. Never more would she cross its threshold. To her aunt's? Ah, what a tale to pour into their ears! Hartley false—false!—a traitor!—a deceiver!

She shrieked; for here he came, his eyes sparkling with joy, his arms extended to clasp her, his loved voice breathing her name.

What followed Celia never could remember distinctly. She knew she wildly repulsed him, taxed him with his cruelty to Rose, and tried to snatch off her engagement ring as she bid him farewell for ever.

There was a blank, and then she found herself on a couch in the library at the Hall, with Lady Mary beside her.

"Lie still, my love," said her ladyship, tenderly. "Hartley, who brought you here, tells me granny Werner has shocked you with one of her gossiping revelations, and forgotten to warn you that this sad story happened fifty years ago. The heroine of it drowned herself in her despair. I am sorry to say that the hero was my Hartley's grandfather."

"But I saw Rose Raymer at the cottage."

Lady Mary smiled.

"Yes, there are half a dozen families of Raymers in this neighborhood, and Rose is a favorite name with them. The girl you saw used to be one of my housemaids, and left to be married, but so irritated her intended with her coquetry, that he enlisted, and has just gone with his regiment to Bombay. Now he is lost to her and is broken-hearted, and as granny's mind is weakened by age, she confuses this Rose with the one who used to be our schoolfellow and friend. And now I suppose I may admit Hartley, who is pacing the hall almost distracted at the length of your swoon and the terrible charges you have brought against him."

So saying, Lady Mary discreetly retired, and the next moment Celia—all her faith in him restored—was weeping joyful tears on her lover's breast.

A Wedding in Russia.—The guests are far more numerous at a Russian than at an American wedding. They are invited to be "assistants" at the wedding. The witness, who is generally the grandest of the connections of the family, is the most important person. He pays the priest's fees. Then come ladies of honor and the bridesmaids. The latter have to purchase sweetmeats for the bridesmaids.

The "boyarin," who carries the sacred picture of Christ in silver and gilt, is generally a little boy. When the party arrives at the church it is his duty to hand the two pictures to the "reader," who places them behind the "royal gates," or leaning against the silver screen.

The old nurse, or housekeeper, superintends the carrying of the dowry from the house of the bride to that of her future husband, and arranges everything for the use of the bride. There is no law as to the number of bridemaids or their costumes. Their dresses are not all alike.

Sometimes on the eve of the wedding day a "farewell girls' party" is given. No gentlemen attend this. All those present must be from the unmarried.

They sing choruses, chase each other in the garden, and romp to their hearts' content. They devour quantities of tea, ice cream, lemonade, and sweetmeats. After supper they say "farewell," and leave the intended bride very much exhausted in view of the ceremonies of the following day.

The old custom is for the betrothed pair to eat nothing on the day of their marriage until after the ceremony, which, in the family of a noble, always takes place in the evening. This makes the day most tiresome to a girl. The bride distributes her cast-off girlish toys, ribbons, and jewelry to her companions. Those things are called "maiden beauty."

The peasant girls cut up and divide among their companions, on their wedding day, the long ribbons which are fastened at the end of the braid of hair which hangs down their back. These peasants, immediately after their marriage, have the hair braided in two plaits and wound about the head, then covered with a sort of tight cap tied behind, or with a cotton or silk handkerchief.

That style of manners which combines self respect with respect for the rights and feelings of others is a quality to be cultivated with extreme diligence.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Ironton, Ohio, sends along the following. William F. Moore and Retha A. Duzen were married here last night, the courtship and marriage being somewhat of a romance. Miss Van Duzen was employed at a woolen mill at Wheelersburgh, Ohio, and whilst knitting socks finished one pair very handsomely and enclosed her name and address in one of them, requesting the buyer to write her. Moore who keeps a store near South Point, this county, bought the socks. He wrote the maiden. They exchanged photos, the result being that Miss Van Duzen has now entered into a life contract to knit fancy hose for Moore.

A new mania has sprung into existence among amateur photographers known as the portrait stamp. It is made like the postage stamp, and of about the same size, and is gummed ready for sticking upon an envelope. How far the secret service will allow this fancy to go unchecked is a question, as its rules are very rigid about anything that even approaches a bit of Government currency or a postal device. If the portrait stamp becomes common, the influence it will exert in retarding the mails may well be taken into consideration. Every clerk in the Post office with any pretensions to gallantry will delay postmarking a woman's letter till he has scanned the features of the sender and formed his deliberate judgment of her points.

A Pittsburgh police official, talking to a reporter about affairs, said that they are doing more in Pittsburgh to prevent crime than could a double force of policemen, and the reason, he added in very plain. "On every street where the arcs are put there is not a nook or corner that cannot be easily looked into, and all kinds of loafers and suspicious persons are fighting shy of the many haunts they formerly occupied in the lower part of the city. You can readily understand how the people who do business mostly in the dark hate the arc lamps when I tell you that a certain person on Second Avenue offered the man who put up the lamps $75 if they would keep dark the place in front of his house. The number of arrests during the night has decreased very perceptibly."

The font in which the son and heir of Prince William of Prussia was baptised the other day is known as the Hohenzollern Font. It is of pure gold, beautifully wrought, and was first used at the baptism of the late Emperor Frederick on Nov. 13, 1831. Since then it has been used at every baptism in the Prussian royal family. The gold of which it was made was, it is worth mentioning, taken little by little, in minute quantities at a time, from the slack and refuse of the great arsenic works in Silesia. The font is, therefore, German in origin as well as in manufacture. It weighs, without its stand, rather more than three pounds and a half. The Court goldsmith, who made the font, took away, as one of his perquisites, the Jordan water in which the Emperor Frederick was baptised, and, carefully sealed up, it is still treasured by the artist's family.

In a family in town there is a cat which is much petted, and a Renfrew, Canada, paper tells this story about it. One day the lady of the house sat down for a moment, and either to relieve her feelings or as a bit of innocent diversion gave vent to a little whistle. Immediately the pet cat sprang up to her lap and with its sheathed paw struck her a blow in the face. The lady thought this strange, but at first hardly connected it with the whistling. However, a little time afterwards, in another room, she happened to repeat the whistle, and immediately the cat sprang up and struck her again. This time the lady though it must be the whistling which was giving puss offence, and so, with "malice aforethought," whistled again. Sure enough the cat chastised her with another blow, square in the face. About the only explanation is that in the whistle it fancied a cat was being given to the pet dog and was jealous.

There has been a great deal of talk in London over the attempted robbery of the young Duchess of Newcastle's diamonds. These stones, which are the family diamonds, are worth a large sum of money, and have always been kept for safety in the safes of Messrs. Coutts & Co., the bankers. They were taken out when the Duchess was presented at the Court, and after that ceremony were taken to the Mount Street residence. The Duke did not like the responsibility, and suggested that they should be taken to a place of safety. This was done one morning and on the following day the Duke and Duchess on returning home found that a thief had entered the apartments and had ransacked it in search of the diamonds. These he had not found, as they were not there, so he helped himself to what there was, having cut open the traveling bag in which the diamonds had been to examine the contents. He was forty-eight hours too late for the bait, a fact which he learned to his lasting regret, as a haul of $200,000 worth of jewels cannot be made every day. Needless to say that the thief has not yet been discovered.

It would be more obliging to say plainly we cannot do what is desired, than to amuse people with false words, which often put them upon false measures.

Our Young Folks.

UNFORTUNATE MYLES.

BY SHEILA.

THERE never was such an unfortunate boy as Myles Johnson—never!

So said his mother (and she had plenty of opportunities of judging); so said his father; so said his neighbors; and so, when she was out of patience with him, said his sister Betty.

It seemed, somehow, to be the fate of Master Myles to come off worse than other people; and when he got into mischief—which was pretty often—he never could manage to get out of it neatly and quietly, like Betty.

It was just the same when they were wee mites of children.

If Betty fell down, she generally contrived to pick out a nice clean piece of road, which did not soil her clothes; but when Myles tumbled down—well, you might be quite certain before you went to pick him up that he had selected a puddle or the muddiest patch for yards round in which to deposit his plump little person.

His ill fortune seemed to cling to him as he grew older.

He went fishing, and caught his own thumb with the hook instead of the fish. He climbed up an apple-tree, and a bough broke, and there was Master Myles Johnson on the sofa for a fortnight with a sprained ankle!

And then, do what he would, he could not manage to stick on Michael, the cunning old donkey—who knew how to open every gate on the farm with his teeth—at least, he only remained in the saddle as long as Michael pleased.

When that rather cross grained animal had had enough of his rider he would stop short suddenly in the middle of a trot, which had the effect of sending Myles over his head to make acquaintance with Mother Earth.

His own head was a pretty thick one, and a bump more or less did not signify much; but it was certainly annoying to think that Betty could stick on, while he could not, and also that Betty could somehow make the donkey go twice as fast as he could.

Betty was only fifteen months older than her brother, but Myles looked up to her as if she had been treble his age.

Whatever she did he tried to do, and sometimes—because, I suppose, he was such an unfortunate boy—he came to grief over it; and then Betty had to console him and cheer him and talk to him like a little old grandmother of seventy-five, until he felt better, and ready for the next piece of misfortune.

But I must tell you about Myles' two grand adventures; and how he made the acquaintance of Mr. Wood, the artist; and how he and Betty were put into a picture, where they may be seen to this day, if you take the trouble to go to the Lee Farm, and step into the parlor the right hand side of the front door.

Betty has a sun bonnet on, and Myles his cap and smock coat, all as life-like as possible, and Mrs. Johnson is very proud of them both.

It was May-time when Myles had his first adventure—at least, it seemed quite an adventure to him, and he made a great deal of it to Betty afterwards.

For some days he had been much exercised in his mind about an umbrella.

Not an umbrella of the ordinary kind, you will understand, but a great big thing which travelled about from place to place, and fixed itself jauntily at the end of a long stick, which was planted in the ground.

The umbrella was not alone; there was a man in a loose white coat and a big straw hat attending upon it, and Myles was wildly curious to see exactly what this man was doing.

One day he perceived the great umbrella planted in a field close to the church.

He stole cautiously round, and approached the enemy from the rear. Myles knew that he was painting, for he could see the brushes and palette.

What he wanted to see so badly was the picture itself; and to this end he crept nearer and nearer.

The stranger took no notice of him till he was quite close; then he suddenly looked up with amused eyes, and Myles felt himself caught.

"Well?" said the man in the white coat; "and what is your opinion on the whole, young friend? It strikes me I have seen you before—eh?"

The voice was a pleasant voice, and Myles felt no desire to run away now, whatever he might have thought at first of doing.

"It's as like as two peas!" he announced with decision, looking from the old church, with its slender gray spire, to the church on the canvas, which was growing under the artist's brush.

"Glad you think so," answered the stranger, with a smile, "and I am sure you are a good judge. What is your name, laddie?"

"Myles Johnson; and Betty's name's Elizabeth."

"Indeed!—is it?" and the stranger laughed outright. "And who is Betty, whose name is Elizabeth, if I may ask?"

"Why, she's my sister, of course," cried Myles, a little surprised at anyone not knowing this very ordinary fact. "She's older than me, and she can skip like anything!"

"Dear me! I should like to see Miss Betty immensely."

"I say, is that easy?" broke in Myles earnestly. "Could I do it?"

"Well, it's easy when you know how," said the other, smiling again; "but it wants just a little practice, you know."

Just then the clock in the tower struck twelve.

"Oh! I must go," cried Myles regretfully—it was so interesting to watch the painting. "Shall you be here when I come back?"

"That depends," answered the stranger. "I shall be here until three o'clock, probably."

How Myles galloped home! and how he galloped back again after dinner! His face was like a peony.

But when he reached the big umbrella, the big umbrella was taking care of itself and of the other things, for the artist was gone.

Myles was seized with a desire to see whether he too could not paint if he had a brush and some pretty colors to paint with. Just one stroke or two—surely that could not do any harm!

There was no person in sight; he really must!

Dab! dab! dab!

Three great splashes of bright green on the pretty gray church! Myles turned pale with fright.

Oh! what had he done?

He looked up, and caught sight of a straw hat and white coat.

There was time to run away, but I am glad to say that Myles chose the more honorable course, and stayed where he was.

It would take too long to tell you what Mr. Wood said; how he forgave Myles, and how Myles cried, and felt "sorrier and sorrier" every moment, until Mr. Wood actually laughed at him, when he cleared up quite suddenly, and began to laugh too.

This was the beginning of their acquaintance, but not the end, for very soon all three—Myles, Betty and Mr. Wood—became firm friends.

And then, delightful to relate, this new friend of theirs invited them to a picnic.

He was going to have a dinner-party for three, as he said, in Bagley Scrubs, and Myles and Betty must come; and they were to meet him in the Long Meadow at eleven.

Would they come?

Of course they would come, and they thought it the most charming plan they had ever heard of.

It was just like that unfortunate boy Myles to go and—

But I must begin at the beginning, and tell you what happened to that hapless lad on the very day of the picnic.

If the shortest way to the Long Meadow had not been across the stepping-stones, everything might have passed off well; but it was a good way round to the bridge, and besides, it gave both Myles and Betty great pleasure to jump from stone to stone, and there was no danger if one was only careful.

But that was just it—if one was only careful!

The two children were in such spirits that they forgot to be careful. And what did that needless fidgety Betty do but begin to dance on a stone in the very middle of the brook.

And of course what Betty did Betty's brother must needs do, and the next moment Myles was capering about on his stone, which was not so smooth and flat as Betty's.

Splash!

Betty gave a scream, and the fishes in the brook swam away in a terrible fright.

There was that unfortunate Myles in the water, with his boots in the air!—and how to get those boots out with Myles at the other end of them was more than Betty could tell.

So she went on screaming, and very soon Mr. Wood came running up, and managed to fish Myles out in a half-drowned condition; and a miserable little object he looked, I can assure you!

There was no picnic for anybody that day, for Myles had to be put to bed; and there he stayed for a whole week, sneezing away.

Betty was his devoted nurse; and Myles kept her fully employed waiting on him and reading to him; and Mr. Wood came in every day, and told them funny stories, and put them both into a picture, which he gave to Mrs. Johnson.

Unfortunately, Mr. Wood went away before Myles could run about out-of-doors again, so that the merry picnic at Bagley Scrubs never took place.

It was partly Betty's fault, because, of course, little girls ought not to begin dancing on stones in the middle of a brook; but then, she didn't fall in, and her brother did.

So I suppose the one to be chiefly blamed was "That Unfortunate Myles."

HELPED THE DOG TO A DRINK.—There is a drinking tank in the centre of the square at the foot of Woodward avenue, says a western paper, where man and beast can slake their thirst, and yesterday at the noon hour a lame dog limped up to the fountain and tried to drink.

His left shoulder was broken and as often as he touched the edge of the tank with his well foot he fell back and tried it over again with the same result. Then he sat back and whined. At that moment the passengers from a ferryboat came along. A foolish-looking young man in gloves and with a light overcoat lined with silk thrown over his arm, crossed to the other sidewalk.

He saw the wounded dog and stopped, reversed his cane, and tucking his hand under the well foreleg of the thirsty dog he lifted him into position and watched him drink his fill with evident satisfaction.

AUNT KATE'S GUESTS.

BY MINNIE DOUGLASS.

THE bright sun was out in full, and the tall elm trees gave a shade that was so nice and cool to the three hot young folk.

"I should so like to have our tea out here," said Ruth. "Do you think that aunt would let us if you were to go and ask her, Tom? I think she would."

Tom did not speak for just a while, then said—

"Why don't you ask her?"

"I think she likes boys best," said Ruth, with a red face.

The fact was that Ruth was much too shy, and this aunt, who had been at the Cape of Good Hope all her life, did not know them at all well as yet.

Tom was not more a pet than the rest, but he was more at home, and had no fear as to what to say when his aunt spoke to him.

Flora took a good look at the two who sat by her, with a smile of fun on her face.

"Aunt Kate likes me just as well as Tom. She likes you too, Ruth. Let's all go and ask her."

"Oh no, not I!" cried Ruth.

"Yes, you!" said Tom, with a laugh, and he caught Ruth's hand, and ran with her to the house.

Flora came as fast as her little fat legs would go, and came up just as Tom got to the door of the room his aunt sat in.

"There is a friend with her!" cried Ruth, and she tried to tug her hand from Tom's; but he held her tight, and went in at the door.

Aunt Kate got up when she saw them, and said:

"My dears! what a noise! What do you want?"

Tom got red then, and let go of Ruth's hand while Flora was the first to speak.

She came to the front with her bright smile, and said:

"Please, Aunt Kate, may we have tea out of doors?"

"Dear me, yes! is that all?" said their aunt, with a laugh. "Come here, Ruth, and all of you, and speak to my friend Miss Blake. These are my guests, Jane, Tom's girl; and here is Tom a boy."

Miss Blake had a kind smile for them, and took Flora on her knee.

"I knew Mr. Grey once, and I hope to see him when he comes to take you all home to town. I think I must go to town some day soon, to see a poor sick child I sent there."

"Why did the sick child go to town?" said Ruth, who had an idea that green fields or the sea shore would have been the best.

"Well, dear, no one could nurse her here—no one knew how to make her well, or keep her still to get well. So I sent her to where they are kind and take care of the sick. And now I must think of my ferns! I want such a heap of them to put in the box I send up there once a week."

She got up, with a kiss to Flora as she put her off her knee.

"Why, Ruth, Tom, Flora, you could all help in this."

"How could we do so, Aunt Kate?" they cried.

"When you have had your tea, go on through the copse down there, and pick as many fern leaves as you can."

They went off and had their tea, which took a short time, nurse thought; but then she had not been told that they were to go to the copse.

Aunt Kate had been glad to get them out for a time, as Mr. Grey had told her he would come that day by the 5 10 train, and did not wish the news to be told.

But when the trap which had been sent to meet Mr. Grey came back, and he was not in it, Aunt Kate saw the groom, and he told her that there was bad news. The train was a wreck, miles off, and of course there was cause to fear that all in it were dead or much hurt.

Aunt Kate got quite white, and nurse, who was near, ran to her aid.

"Do not say a word," said Aunt Kate, in a low grave voice; "and, James, keep the trap there till I send to you."

Then as she went in she said:

"Nurse, tell James to drive to the post in the town—the last mail is in, and he is to come back at once."

Aunt Kate sat down, and with a sad face saw Ruth, Tom, and Flora come through the next field, their arms full of fresh green ferns.

Nurse met them, and said in a kind voice.

"Your aunt told me to take these from you, dears. My! what a lot you've got! And she thinks you must go to bed now, and she'll come up and see you soon."

"Bed!" cried Tom, for the word did not please him at all.

"Yes, it's eight o'clock now, and you shall have some nice milk up in your rooms."

So they went, and were quite glad of the rest when once in bed.

Aunt Kate went out and stood on the lawn; she could not sit still in the house while her heart was so sad and full of fear.

Just then a dog cart drove up. She thought it was James, but saw that it was a strange horse, and drew back by the porch.

A quick step on the path, and Mr. Grey stood before her. He gave her a kiss and said—

"Of course you heard from me at once, Kate, to tell you that I should come by the S. W. line, and that Wells would drive me over?"

"No, Tom, not a word!" said Aunt Kate, with a gasp and a burst of tear, which made Mr. Grey turn white with dread.

"What is wrong, Kate? Ruth, Tom, Flora?"

"No, no, no!" she cried, "all are well here; but—the train I sent to meet is a wreck, and I thought you were in it!"

A small form in white had crept half way down-stairs, and now gave a shriek of joy.

"It is, it is!" cried Flora, and flew to his side, to be held close a long time. Then they all went up-stairs, and told the tale to Ruth and Tom.

Mr. Grey had not come to take them home, but just to see them, and he said he could stay the next night too, and had brought a new book to read to them.

You may be sure they all kept close round his chair when he read that book next night, and all their hearts felt sad for those who had lost their friends in the train on that bright June day.

FIGHTING A SNAKE.

BY D. K.

"CAN that be a snake?"

It was a snake—one of the deadliest in the whole African continent; and it was crawling in at the window beside which Mrs. Sayre lay ill and almost helpless upon a rude make-shift couch, with her baby beside her.

Even as a girl she had always had a great horror of serpents, and when she became the wife of an African missionary, and went out to the "Dark Continent" with her husband, her ill fortune sent her to a small mission station on the Lower Zambesi, where the whole country was literally creeping with poisonous snakes.

One glance at the hideous creature that was gliding towards her through the open window was enough to show her that this time she had little chance to escape.

She had seen too often that flat lozenge-shaped head, that strangely-marked neck, and those irregular patches of color, scattered like blots over the scaly skin, not to recognize at once the terrible mamba of South Africa, fiercest and deadliest of all snakes, whose bite is absolutely certain death.

Inch by inch the horrible reptile came writhing in through the opening, nearer and nearer to her with every movement, and still she lay there as if spell-bound, without moving or uttering a sound, with her eyes fixed upon the serpent like one watching a show.

All at once the baby—which was rolling its tiny body to and fro upon the soft rugs that covered the floor—made a sudden movement that brought it almost within reach of the snake.

Instantly the mamba (which had by this time wriggled all its eight-foot length into the room) reared up with a sharp angry hiss, and drew back its head as if to strike the child.

That sight broke the spell.

Restored to all her lost strength by the terrific excitement of the moment, the mother sprang to her feet, and shrieking out a wild cry for help, seized with both hands the thick scaly neck of the frightful creature, which at any other time she could not have forced herself to look at, much less to touch, and held it fast in a clutch that well-nigh strangled it.

And then began a dreadful combat in which one or other of the combatants must die.

The serpent's struggles were tremendous, and in the fury of its pain and rage it wound its cold slippery length around the lady's arms and body, straining every muscle of its strong coils to tear itself loose from that choking grasp, and with one stroke of its deadly fangs to kill its assailant on the spot.

And all this while the baby on the floor, evidently regarding this death-struggle as a particularly amusing show got up for his especial benefit, laughed and clapped its tiny hands in glee.

But such a conflict could not last. The momentary strength lent to Mrs. Sayre by horror and agony was fast giving way beneath the dreadful strain of this battle for life and death.

She felt her grasp failing, and knew that the moment the serpent got its head free she and her child were lost!

One last scream for help, and then, driven to desperation, she actually fastened her teeth in the snake's broad flat head, and bit it almost in two.

Then everything seemed to whirl and grow dark before her eyes; and, letting fall the mamba's writhing body, she sank fainting on the floor beside it, just as her husband, alarmed by her cries, burst headlong into the room.

It was a strange scene upon which he entered.

On the ground lay his wife in a swoon, with a huge blackish-green snake outstretched beside her, while the baby, crowing with glee, was peeping curiously into the monster's open mouth.

But the terrible serpent was dead; and the story of its death—when Mrs. Sayre had recovered sufficiently to tell it—was the wonder of the settlement for many and many a day after.

IMAGINATION is the author of a majority of our ills.

THE CHILDREN.

They are such tiny feet!
They have gone so short a way to meet
The years which are required to break
Their steps to evenness and make
Them go
More sure and slow.

They are such little hands!
Be kind; things are so new and life but stands
A step beyond the doorway. All around
New day has found
Such tempting things to shine upon; and so
The hands are tempted oft, you know.

They are such fond, clear eyes,
That widen to surprise
At every turn! They are so often held
To sun or flowers, showers soon dispelled
By looking in our face.
Love asks for so much grace.

They are such fair, frail gifts!
Uncertain as the rifts
Of light that lie along the sky;
They may not be here by-and-by.
Give them not love, but more, above
And better, patience with the love.

STRANGE BURIALS.

The eccentricities of humanity exhibit themselves in various ways, but, perhaps, in no way so grotesquely as in the disposition of a body after death.

Dr. Renny, of Newport-Paynell, Eng., was buried in his own garden, which had been his special care and pride in his lifetime.

The great printer, Baskerville, had a grave dug for himself near his own grounds.

The Rev. Langton Freeman, was even more erratic and whimsical in his wishes.

He desired that his corpse remain uninterred until it became offensive. It was then to be carried on a bed, wrapped in a strong double winding sheet, without any ostentation, to his summer house at Whelton, and the description given of our Saviour's burial was to be followed.

The doors and windows of the summer-house were all to be secured, and the building to be planted round with evergreens and fenced in with pailings of oak.

The reverend eccentric lies there still. A few years back, an entrance was effected and the intruders beheld a dried-up figure lying with one arm across the chest and the other hanging down the body.

The Nields of Dunham, Cheshire, made a family graveyard of one of their fine orchards.

Sir James Tillie, of Pentilly Castle, was interred under a tower in his own park.

Boucher Hull was buried beneath the tower he erected on Leith Hill.

Sam Johnson, the dancing-master, obtained permission to lie after death in a plantation at Gawsforth, near Macclesfield.

An Essex maister ordered his body to be covered with one of the hair-cloths used in drying malt, and put in the ground in a wood belonging to him.

Thomas Hollis, directed that his corpse should be buried ten feet below the surface of one of his fields, and that the ground be ploughed over immediately afterwards, to obliterate all trace of his abiding place.

Sir Charles Hastings ordered his body wrapped in anything that would hold it together, and buried in the green open at a spot he had selected, the ground to be planted with acorns, that he might render a last service to his country, by contributing to nourish a good English oak.

Only an odd sort of vanity could have been the impelling motive in the case of the brickmaker who built a vault for himself and wife at the side of a lonely footpath, near the Hertfordshire village of Flaunden—a melancholy memorial that has startled many belated pedestrians.

A clergyman of Beverly, N. J., built just outside his dining-room windows his own vault and one for his wife, and, to emphasize his strong churchmanship, the bricks were so laid that they formed ecclesiastical crosses.

In Ludlow, Vt., an erratic fellow, who had been a miller, had his tomb built, the design representing a mill-stone supported by four pillars. He also paid $100 to have his eulogy proclaimed in church, as if it were already on his grave.

He is so proud of his mortuary monument that he exhibits a wooden model of it at the country agricultural fair.

A part of the inscription reads, addressing his wife: "Come, my sweet companion; meet me here."

The appropriateness of the remark is, however, a little marred by the fact that his wife was the first to die.

Lord Camelford, the famous duelist, had a spice of sentiment in his composition; for he added a codicil to his will, expressing a wish that his body should be removed to a place marked by three trees, on the borders of Lake St. Lampierre.

At the foot of the central tree, Camelford had passed many solitary hours contemplating the mutability of human affairs, and he desired that this tree should be taken up, his body deposited in the ground and the tree replanted, all of which was done.

The Godwin Sands, that brought many men to death, reversed the process when the leaden coffin of Mr. Merrides was deposited therein.

The Sands resented the liberty, and two months afterwards the coffin was picked up at sea by a Dutch vessel.

Bentham bequeathed his body to Dr. Southwood Smith to be dissected and lectured upon. His wishes were fulfilled, and the corpse was skeletonised.

The doctor tried to preserve the head intact, by placing it in an air pump, over sulphuric acid, but the experiment resulted in extracting all expression from the features; so a waxen head was substituted for the original, and the skeleton stuffed out until it filled Bentham's clothes.

Seated in his favorite chair, and holding in one hand his pet stick, the philosopher was placed in a glass case with folding doors, and for some years was a quiet lodger in his friend's house in Finsbury Square.

When the doctor removed to another residence, he found it impossible to accommodates his old acquaintance any longer, and made a gift of him to the University College.

The authorities do not seem to have appreciated the strange present, although they accepted it, for the donor says:

"Any one may see it who inquires there for it, but no publicity is given to the fact that Bentham reposes there in some back-room."

A lady patient of a Manchester surgeon repaid his professional attentions by bequeathing him twenty-five thousand pounds, the liberal legacy being clogged with the condition that he should have her body embalmed in the most perfect manner possible, and that once every year he should look upon her face in the presence of two witnesses.

The surgeon accepted the legacy and the condition, embalmed his whimsical benefactress, and put her for safe-keeping, into an ordinary glass-faced English clock-case. The lady is suspected to have figured long afterwards as a mummy in the Manchester Museum.

David Garrick's widow religiously preserved her wedding sheets that they might serve her for a shroud.

Grains of Gold.

Do well and right and let the world sink.

Confine your tongue, least it confine you.

He that lies down with dogs must expect to rise with fleas.

They who criticise most are very often most open to criticism.

The end of man in an action, not a thought though it were the noblest.

Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy.

Sniffleseances catches water in leaky tubs, and then complains that there was no rain.

Those who live on vanity must, not unreasonably, expect to die of mortification.

That actions is best which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.

Of all evil spirits abroad at this hour in the world, insincerity is the most dangerous.

To prosecute the unfortunate is like throwing stones on one who has fallen in a well.

Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.

It is a great misfortune not to have enough wit to speak well, or not enough judgment to keep silent.

Good qualities are the substantial riches of the mind; but it is good breeding that puts them off to advantage.

He who comes up to his own idea of greatness must always have had a very low standard of it in his own mind.

He that does not know those things which are of use and necessity for him to know, is but an ignorant man, whatever he may know besides.

Femininities.

Bad cooking on the part of the wife is held by a Texan judge to be good ground for divorce.

A lady in Lewiston, Maine, rejoices in the possession of hair measuring forty-nine inches in length.

The "Girl I Left Behind Me" is much sung of, but the "girl who left me behind" is known neither in song nor story.

A woman who insists on her husband telling her every time he intends to bring company to dinner pays her housekeeping a poor compliment.

Mrs. Gadd: "Does your boy take after you or his father?" Mrs. Gabb: "He takes after his father mostly. You never can believe a word he says."

A Bachelors' Union has been formed at Kalamazoo, Mich. We never heard of but one bachelors' union that was successful, and that was called marriage.

It is said that at a wedding in Arizona the bride received, with other gifts, a furnished house, a mule, a heifer, a barrel of beer, a cask of wine, some whisky and a cork-screw.

Queen Olga of Greece is a sovereign possessing many charming domestic qualities. She has many accomplishments, and can supervise the cooking of a dinner or trim a bonnet with equal skill.

He: "Darling, will you elope with me?" She: "Oh! I should just love to, but—" He: "What, precious?" She: "We should have to do without wedding presents then, and I can't bear to think of that!"

The working women are the sturdier flowers in the garden of life—the rue and the rosemary, the hollyhocks and marigolds, and daffys and dahlias; no less highly prized than the more fragile sisterhood.

Bessie: "I hear dreadful stories about Ida's husband. It is awful how some men go on!" Jennie: "Well, just look at your own brother." Bessie: "But you must make an allowance in his case. He has been married a whole year."

Mr. Wickwire: "Well, my dear, how is the new girl getting along? Does she seem to be any more economical than the other one?" Mrs. Wickwire: "Just about the same. She doesn't seem to economise on anything except the broom."

"One minute, mamma," said a young woman. "I'll be down as soon as I have finished taking this photograph." "Photograph of what?" "Of George's last letter to me. In these days of perishable writing inks it's just as well to be careful."

Outside of those in public office, there are three persons in the United States who are entitled to send and receive mail matter free of postage. They are the widows of Presidents Polk, Garfield and Grant. The privilege is granted by special act of Congress.

When a maiden has been singing to her own accompaniment "I want to be an angel," and you hear her when lunch is served asking to be helped to pork and liver, it rather takes the poetry out of the performance. But, after all, life is made up of these sharp contrasts.

"Please, ma'am, will you give me an old suit of your husband's clothes? I am one of the Johnstown sufferers." "Poor man! Of course I will. Come right in. So you were in that dreadful flood, were you?" "No, ma'am; but my wife sent all my clothes to the people who were."

A weekly paper published recently a gruesome story of the kid glove trade. It was stated that, in order to obtain a high degree of fineness and pliancy, the wretched kids had to be skinned before death, though, as a concession to sentiment, they were stupefied with an opiate prior to the operation.

Neighbor boy: "Ma said she'd lick me if I didn't ask your forgiveness. She's watching me from the window; so out with it or I'll thump you when I catch you alone." Our boy: "Well, I'll forgive you till my big brother gets home, and then if you know when you're well off you'll stay mighty close to your own house."

A woman living near West Seneca, N. Y., has a well-cultivated flower farm of 12 acres, with four greenhouses. She sometimes clears $2000 a year from the sale of her flowers and plants. She says floriculture is a good business for women, but the West is the best field for it, and if she were to begin over again she would go there.

Alters the case. Woman," entering newspaper office: "Can you tell me who wrote that editorial on 'Marriage a State of Restricted Freedom'?" Editor: "One of your lady correspondents, madam." Woman: "Oh, well, I thought it was a man, and I was going to give him a piece of my mind. But if it was a woman I guess it is all right."

Two rival belles at an evening party were seated in the conservatory with their respective cavaliers enjoying their supper. The gas was turned down somewhat, as it should be in a conservatory at an evening party. "My dear Julia," said one of the fascinating creatures, "how beautiful your complexion is—in this dim light!" "Oh, thank you!" responded her rival; "and how lovely you look in the dark!"

"Modiste," said Mrs. Sinkerson, with an accent that was slightly off, as she read the sign on the red brick house, "Matilda, what does that mean?" "Don't you know what that means, mamma?" replied her daughter. "That's another word for dressmaker." "Well, it ain't a good name for them." "Why not?" "Why not? Look at them two ball dresses you got last week. You wouldn't call anybody that made such things as them modiste, would you?"

The Archduchess Stephanie, the widow of the Crown Prince Rudolph, of Austria, has been released from the quasi imprisonment to which, according to the law of the house of Hapsburg, the widow of any Prince who is in the line of succession must submit. She is attended night and day by a couple of duennas, and during that time she may not leave the country. The Emperor has received the formal notification, with a certificate from the court accoucheurs, that "no posthumous child of the Crown Prince Rudolph will be born."

Masculinities.

Behavior is a mirror in which every one shows his image.

The most dictatorial man sometimes has to mind the baby.

People who get lonesome realize what poor company they are.

He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater.

Mrs. Brown: "If you had only listened to me—" Mr. Brown: "I'd have been talked to death long ago."

Sir Morrell Mackenzie is strongly opposed to the use of tobacco and alcohol by people who use their voices in public.

An umbrella that has done service for 40 years is owned by a Stroudsburg, Pa., man, and still protects him from the rain.

A marriage license was issued at Pittsburg lately to a couple whose ages foot up 136 years. Both have been married before.

To keep the head cool on hot nights a folded newspaper, or a pamphlet, between the head and the pillow, is a good thing and handy.

Suspicion is a good safeguard; but mistrust is not a characteristic of the candid and honorable, and only bitter experience teaches it to true men.

A Wisconsin farmer's mouth is slowly growing together, and all he can do when his wife begins to talk is to shuffle around the house with a half-inch furrow on his forehead and kick at the cat.

Seaside mem.: Acquaintances to be worthy and lasting are only formed through the recognized channels of introduction at the hands of a pure and honorable friend. A word to the wise we hope may be in time.

"In South America," says an Ohio paper, "the ladies smoke with and like the men." Here in North America the ladies are not in the habit of smoking with the men, but there's no doubt about their liking them.

"King Milan is fearfully short of money and utterly without credit." When Brokely read this he thrust both hands into his pockets up to his wrists, and exclaimed, melodramatically, "Now I know what it is to feel like a king!"

A new work on music draws the interesting contrast between the time when Lord Chesterfield warned his son against being a fiddler, even in the amateur sense, when a prince of the royal blood is the most noted amateur in England.

The man whose watch is 5 minutes fast is always behind time. It is he whom you see running for the train, and it is he who keeps your dinners waiting. Never expect a man to be punctual who habitually keeps his watch 5 minutes ahead of time.

Brown, producing his scrap book and pointing with pride to one of his early effusions: "There, read that! I wrote that when I was only 13 years old!" Fog, after reading: "Can it be possible, Brown, that you were so old as 12 when you wrote this?"

Traveler on a Mississippi steamer: "What makes you have the bar in the centre? Why don't you have it on the side, out of the way?" Barkeeper: "Well, we would, but you see it won't do to have too many passengers on one side of the boat."

"Fred," said a father to his son, "I hear that you and your wife quarrel and wrangle every day. Let me warn you against such a fatal practice." "Whoever told you that, father, was totally mistaken; my wife and I haven't spoken to one another for a month."

A man in Mexico, who carried a carbine and revolver, and tried to kill another man, is described as being "of gentlemanly appearance and good address." If he had carried another revolver and a bowie-knife, he might have been looked upon as a leader in polite society.

"Why is it that Cawdle has such a gait? He acts all the time as if he were walking on tiptoe." "Well, you see he had three babies in quick succession up at his house, and the poor fellow actually can't break himself of going around as if he were afraid of disturbing somebody."

He, enraged and engaged: "Why, Laura, how is this? I thought you were to save those dances until I came, and here your programme is full!" Laura: "O, that is all right. I filled it out with dummy names. It saves embarrassment, you know, when disagreeable persons ask you to dance with them."

"Pygmalion," murmured Galatea, as she looked far across the surging, horizon-rimmed sea, "I love to drink in every word you utter." "And why, Galatea?" asked Pygmalion, anxiously, as a newly-born hope sprang suddenly into life within. "Because I am so fond of soft drinks." And the waves rolled in as before.

"Jake" Morris, janitor of the City Hall, New Orleans, indulged in a prolonged laugh, one night recently, over the predicament into which a friend had got. Next morning he was found dead in his room. The theory advanced is that his death was caused by palpitation of the heart, brought on by the immoderate laughing.

In a hospital in one of the large cities of Central France the physician-in-chief, in the course of his round of inspection, approached a cot, and after feeling the patient's pulse remarked, "Hum—he is doing very nicely; his pulse is much better." "It is no you my, doctor," replied the nurse; "but it is not the same man. Yesterday's patient is dead, and this one has been put in his place." "Ah," said the doctor, "different patient, eh? Well, same treatment!" and he walked on.

A gentleman who has tried it vouches for this story: "Taking a gallon jug of whisky he passed a string through its cork, which cork dropped to the bottom of the jug. The twine was then introduced into a watermelon vine by slitting the vine, and the vine was permitted to produce only two melons. When the melons were matured they were served at a private barbecue to six gentlemen. The effect was astonishing. The gallon of whisky got in its work. Not a drop of the liquor remained in the jug when the melons were ripe.

Recent Book Issues.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

Cassell's Family Magazine for August opens with the serial "A Woman's Strength," by Arabella M. Hopkinson. The "Family Doctor" discourses on the care of the eyes. "A Trip to the Mount Blanc of New Zealand" describes a picturesque but little known region. Edward Irenæus Stevenson, tells a story of adventure called "The Wolf's Mouth," following this is an eminently practical paper by Lizzie Heritage on the delicacies that may be eaten with the indispensable afternoon tea. "What is Chamber Music?" by Frederick J. Crowest, is an interesting paper. "A Day in a Proof Reader's Life" describes a *night* of proof reading in the office of a morning paper. Several short stories, poetry, and a "Gatherer" unusually full of the news of scientific discovery bring this excellent number to an end.—Cassell & Co., New York.

"The Love Dream of Gatty Fenning," by Sarah Doudney, is the new serial begun in the August *Quiver*, and it opens up most attractively. The Rev. P. B. Bower takes the expression "They'll Cover up Some Ugly Place" as the text for a little essay. "Memorable Letters and their Writers" is the subject of a third paper by Rev. B. Shindler. "What Came of a Holiday" is a story in three chapters and one illustration. "The Foundling Hospital at Moscow" is described by E. W. Frith, and graphically illustrated. "Peter's Love and Boating," is by the Rev. J. Telford. "The Courage of Love" is a short story which will be appreciated. "Some Old Church Chests" is illustrated. "Dorothy's Vocation" grows in interest. A paper called "Of Offending the Little Ones" will be read by all mothers as eagerly as their daughters will reap "A Rose Bedewed." There is a goodly stock of "Short Arrows," poetry, etc. Cassell & Company, publishers, New York.

"Study of a Head," which forms the frontispiece in the July *English Illustrated Magazine*, is a beautifully artistic piece of work in sepia, engraved by Lacour from a drawing by E. Brown Jones. The leading place is given this month to an instalment of "Sant' Ilario" which is one of Marion Crawford's strongest novels. This is followed by "Recollections of Suakim," the Venice of the Red Sea, by the war artist, Walter Trusoott, beautifully illustrated by the author. "Picturesque, unappreciated Suakim" will be be better appreciated by those who read this article. "Jenny Harlowe," the thrilling story begun in the May number, is concluded this month in a startling manner. The quaint old poem, from Deuteromelia, 1609 "Who Liveth to be Merry," gives the best of opportunities for six pages of Hugo Thomson's matchless illustrations. Arthur Paters n's new serial, "The Better Man," is getting intensely interesting. There are also other interesting matter, poetry, etc. Published at New York.

"A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE," ETC.—Talleyrand's wife was a lady of stately presence and gracious manners, but her education had been neglected, and she had not tact enough to conceal the fact. Her husband invited Denon, Superintendent of the Mint, and a special favorite of Napoleon, to dinner, and on his return home he said to his wife—

"Denon will dine with us next week. He has been a great traveller, and I want you to say something complimentary to him about his travels, as his influence with the Emperor may be useful to me."

Like a good wife, Madame Talleyrand promised to comply with her husband's request. Unfortunately the only book of travels she had read was the entertaining but not strictly accurate "Robinson Crusoe," and by some mysterious mental process she came to the conclusion that Denon was the hero of that book.

At dinner, wishing to show special courtesy to her guest, she plied him with questions about his man Friday. The Master of the Mint was astonished at her inquiries till at last it dawned upon him that his hostess really believed him to be Robinson Crusoe.

His astonishment and that of the company cannot be described. The story flew like wildfire, and was told and retold in every *salon* in Paris, and it was some time before Denon could be convinced that the lady really intended to pay him a compliment.

TRUSTS AND TRUSTS.—The son of a very eminent lawyer, while awaiting sentence in the felon's dock was asked by the Judge: "Do you remember your father?" "Perfectly," said the youth; "whenever I entered his presence he said 'run away, my lad, and don't trouble me.'" The great lawyer was thus enabled to complete his famous work on the "Law of Trusts," and his son in due time furnished a practical commentary on the way in which his father had discharged that most sacred of trusts, committed to him in the person of his child.

SERVILITY and civility are as separate as the poles.

PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN from the suffering and distress caused by Worms! by using Dr. Jayne's Tonic Vermifuge. It thoroughly destroys these parasites, and by its Tonic properties builds up the system. There is no better medicine for the General Debility or Dyspepsia of either Young or Old.

CONCERNING SHEEP.

IN spite of the interest I took, and still take, in sheep, I am convinced there is no stupider animal in all creation.

One may perhaps make out, by special pleading, that horses and dogs are astonishingly intelligent, but no one can convince a man who has herded sheep, and seen them exhibit their foolishness in a thousand ways, that they are anything but semi-idiotic, although to an outsider without responsibility, their obstinacy and obtuseness may be merely farcical.

Remembering how they served me when I was charged with seeing to their safety and general well-being, I sometimes laugh, but at the time I generally swore.

One would think a ewe who had been the mother of a lamb for several years in succession would at last learn that a man was not blood-thirstily desirous of destroying its last acquisition in the shape of offspring, but nevertheless an ancient ewe is as foolish as her grand-daughter, showing the most visible anxiety on one's approach, even when the herd comes to ass at her in her trouble.

The lambing season is at all times a period of toil and care in a country where the flocks are herded by day and night on account of wild dogs or coyotes; but if the ewes showed the least spark of reason, that would lighten more than half one's burden.

Let me give an illustration, and say that I have a dozen ewes, with offspring from a few hours to a day old, which I must put by themselves. I have made the flock travel during the day, so that their little corral is now no more than a mile off.

Meantime the sun is sinking over the brow of a westward hill, and in less than an hour it will be dark.

Surely, a novice will say, it cannot take more than a few minutes to put these in yonder corral, which seems but a step across the plain. Wait, my young friend, and see.

I am on horseback, and have my long stock whip. I go carefully through the flock, slowly drive the mothers out, and garner my twenty-four in one group.

I put their heads in the right direction, and move behind them in a quiet walk. But some of them gaze longingly after those who are not yet mothers, and quietly edge off to the right.

In intercept them cautiously. Now that ewe on the left has her tail where her head ought to be and her lamb totters after her.

When I have turned her those on the right reverse front again, so I go back a little more quickly. With a sudden jump the hindmost ewe goes on, frightens her nearest neighbor, the last lamb is left alone, and the next one has a ewe by its side which is not its mother.

Now the result of this manœuvre is very complex, and not to be disposed of in a few words. The deserted lamb bleats loudly and laments, whereon all the ewes turn round hurriedly in great anxiety, except perhaps the real mother, who is content for a moment with her neighbor's offspring.

Perhaps two or three run back a little way, and then their lambs cry out for them to return. By-and-by the ewe who has the little stranger by her side turns to smell it, and for a moment looks suspicious.

When a second sniff has converted her dread suspicion into certainty she butts the poor staggering little wretch over, and scurries fearfully from one to the other, knocking half of them down when she is sure they are not hers.

By this time she is at the head of the band, and the horrible thought strikes her that she must have left her lamb with the main flock. She is off like lightning, and so am I, being lucky if I stop and turn her.

When I do get her back the others are carefully retracing their steps; while the deserted lamb, being sure that every sheep it sees is its parent, tries to obtain milk on the strength of its relationship.

By the time it has been knocked down half a dozen times the mother comes up at a run, there is a bleat and a baa, and momentary content.

I turn them and begin again, being a little heated in temper. I crack my whip softly, and then louder as I move on.

Suddenly a lamb, probably the very youngest, is struck with the evident belief that my horse is its mother, and tries to get under his hoofs. I stop until the deserted parent comes and persuades it that a horse after all is not a sheep.

When that is settled, and the lamb has taken a little milk to make quite sure, I move on again.

Alas! I come a little too close, and a ewe who is smitten with intense hunger, and the apparent desire to eradicate one particular knot of grass, does not see me until I am right over her.

In a moment she frightens all the rest, the big sheep are together, and the lambs by themselves. And then what a Babel!

I have to stop two or three who break out to go to the main body, now some distance away, and then the lambs come to the conclusion that one ewe in particular is responsible for them all, while she is perversely inclined to believe that I have stolen her particular and natural property.

The other agonized mothers hurry up and dash into the bleating band, smell and butt over one after the other in terrible anxiety, and then subside into their customary demeanor as each finds her own.

There is peace once more; but by this time the sun has disappeared, the shadows lengthen rapidly over the dusty plain, and the corral is nearly as far off as it was at first.

What next, then? Why, this, that one lamb declines, poor tired little wretch, to go further on any persuasion.

So I dismount, and lift it up very slowly, while the wild-eyed mother watches every motion I make. I walk on, but, before I have got a yard the ewe rushes madly after the rest, looking for the very lamb she saw me lift, and her baaing sorrow would make any one else but a sheep-herder pity her.

After some ineffectual sniffs, which the other ewes resent, she too thinks that her lamb has returned to the main flock in some miraculous manner, although she ought to know that it cannot move at all. I have to put it down, mount in hot haste, and do another fiery gallop.

Then the same thing occurs again, but I am more cruelly careful this time, and pinch the lamb every few yards to make it bleat. The mother runs up and down wildly, but comes to smell it as I stop and hold it out at arm's length. Then she backs and after another step or two I have to repeat the holding out and pinching, while on both sides of me the others are trying to return.

At last I have to put it down and get them together again, with the inevitable result that they lose their lambs once more, and unanimously resume their sniffing, butting over and wild rushes, just as if it was the first time it had ever happened.

And it is nearly dark by the time we reach the corral. When we do, all the ewes get in while the lambs stay out.

On getting the lambs in, the ewes are out. When I think I am on the point of getting them all in one ewe will stay out with the wrong lamb, whom she knocks sprawling. Then she rushes half a dozen times round the corral without seeing the entrance.

Meanwhile the lamb finds its mother with a fence between, and is making great efforts to get through a hole much too small for it, while the mother eyes it from within in the last stage of fear.

If I finally can leave them by the time the light of day has quite faded and supper is finished at the camp or home ranch, I am lucky.

And this is repeated often and often, until the lambs know their mothers well and the sheep have become accustomed to be nightly corralled.

It may perhaps throw some light on the obscure causes of the stupidity of sheep to see them fight.

To watch two rams engage in a duel, which they do in a most gentlemanly manner, as if it were as much a matter of etiquette as an engagement with swords in the environs of Paris, is better than most farces nowadays.

Perhaps there are some ten or twenty rams in a yard or corral, and presently two put their heads together. Probably they are having a conversation, and in it some debatable matter crops up, for one shakes his head impatiently as if doubting the word of his interlocutor.

The insulted ram looks up, advances a step or two, and they rattle their horns together. Instantly all the other gentlemen gather round as the two intending combatants march backwards step by step with an admirable slowness and deliberation.

They are the two knights at the ends of the lists. There is an instant's pause, and then they hurl themselves violently forward to meet forehead to forehead with a shock that ought to break their skulls. Then the solemn backward march recommences, the pause is made, and the two belligerents leap at each other once more, and the terrible thud is heard again.

Sometimes they run ten courses before one turns dizzy and declines the battle, but oftener five or six blows make the thinner-skulled turn away, to be contemptuously hustled in the rear by the conqueror.

Occasionally the sight of one set of duellists inspires the unoccupied lookers-on with a noble ardor, and couple after couple join in to march backwards side by side, and rush forward in line to meet the opposing forces.

It seems to me that there is more interest in this than the mere farce of the display.

However such a habit arose, it can hardly now be advantageous to the species, and must tend to lower them in the scale of intellect; for while the thickest-skulled remain lords, those with the most room for brains often get their craniums cracked with the most fatal results.

This may help to explain the very uncommon idiocy of domesticated sheep.

Sheep-herding is supposed by those who have never followed it to be an easy, idle, lazy way of procuring a livelihood; but no man who knows as much of their ways as I do will think that.

It is true that there are times when there is little or nothing to be done, when a man can sit under a tree quietly and think of all the world save his own particular charge; but for the most part, if he have a conscience, he will feel a burden of responsibility upon him which of itself, independently of the work he may have to do, will earn his little monthly wage of twenty dollars and the rough ranch food of "hog and hominy."

For there is no ceasing of labor for the Texas herder of the plains; Sunday and week-day alike, the dawning sun should see him with his flock, and even at night he is still with them as they are "bedded out" in the open.

Even if he can "corral" them in a rough sort of yard, some slinking coyote may come by and scare them into breaking bounds; and when they are not corralled, the bright moon may entice them to feed quietly against the wind, until at last the herder wakes to find his charge has vanished, and must be anxiously sought for.

One day I used up three horses and covered over ninety miles, more than fifty of it at a hard canter or gallop—and if that be not work I should like to know what is.

This, too, goes on day after day during shearing, just when the days are growing hot and hotter still, the spare herbage browning, and the water becomes scantier and scantier.

And for a recompense? There is none in working with sheep.

They are quiet, peaceable, stupid, illogical, incapable of exciting affection, very capable of rousing wrath; far different from the terrible excitement of a bellowing herd of long-horned cattle as they break away in a stampede, among whom is danger and sudden death and the glory of motion and conquest; or with horses thundering over the plain in hundreds, like a riderless squadron, shaking the ground, with waving manes, long flowing tails, and flashing eyeballs, whom one can love and delight in, and shout to with a strange vivid joy that sends the blood tingling to the heart and brain.

Were I to go back to such a life I would choose the danger, and be discontented to meander on behind the slow and harmless wool-bearers, cursing a little every now and again at their foolishness, and then plodding on once more, bunched up in an inert mass on a slow-going horse who wearily stretches his neck almost to the ground, as he dreams, perhaps, of the long, exhilarating gallops, after his own kind that we once had together, being conscious, I dare say, of the contemptuous pity I (his rider) feel for the slow foredoomed mutions that crawl before us on the long and weary plain.

GIVING HIM NO CHANCE.—It has been often said that the most difficult thing in the world is to abash a thoroughly self-satisfied person, especially when that person happens to be a fool. Tradition tells of a certain bullying lawyer who was never silenced but once—viz., when Douglas Jerrold, hearing him say that "necessity knows no law," asked quietly—

"Pray, sir, are you a necessity?"

Every sailor is familiar with the story of the midshipman who, being ordered to apologize to his superior officer for having said that he was "not fit to carry buns to a bear," did so thus—

"Mr. G—, I said just now that were not fit to carry buns to a bear; I was wrong, and apologize with pleasure, as I am now quite convinced that you are fit to carry them!"

But by far the most effectual silencing of this kind on record is the following, which is still preserved among the family legends of one of the great houses of England:

Towards the close of the last century, there lived an English earl, who, whenever he came up to London for the season, was greatly annoyed by the constant visits of a "shabby-genteel" acquaintance, whose chief delight was to have the reputation of being on intimate terms with people of rank and fashion.

The man being a distant relation of his own, the earl (who was a very easy, good-natured fellow), could not quite make up his mind to forbid him the house outright, but endeavored to avoid him by being (or pretending to be) not at home when his tormentor called.

Even this device, however, availed nothing against this human mosquito, who, when told that the earl and his lady were from home, used to answer that in that case he would come in and sit by the drawing-room fire, or watch the working of the French clock, or play with the countess' monkey.

At length the earl's head footman (who was quite as indignant as his master at this unceasing persecution) determined to put a stop to it once for all.

Accordingly, the next time this unwelcome visitor presented himself, the lackey barred his passage by planting his own bulky form squarely in the doorway, and said, in tones of cold and solemn dignity—

"My lord and my lady's not at 'ome: the fire's gone out, the clock's stopped, and the monkey's dead!"

"Yes, madam," said Trampoline, as he gratefully took from the outstretched hand of the woman a large, moist slab of pie, mottled like Mexican onyx and embossed with a heavy incrustation of lava: "yes, I have seen better days, but just as I have seen better clothes—other people had 'em." He paused for her reply, but she bowed her head silently; and he, engulfing the pie with a convulsive movement of the throttle, lifted his hands to Heaven with an agonizing gesture, and passing on, was never again seen no more.

AN absent-minded German professor was one day observed walking down the street with one foot continually in the gutter, the other on the pavement. A pupil meeting him saluted him with "Good evening, Herr Professor; how are you?"

"I was very well, I thought," answered the Professor, "but now I don't know what's the matter with me; for the last half-hour I have been limping."

Humorous.

THE MILLER'S WOOING.

"Love me little, love me long,"
Sang the dusty miller
To his wheat ari, and his song
Did a maize and thrill her.

"Bid me barley hope—oh! give
Me one grain of comfort;
I would eat on thee and live
Holding on to some fort.

"In your eyes now love-looks shine,
There lies cereal pleasure,
Oh! hominy joys are mine,
Filling up my measure."

Came the maiden's corn-ful laugh
At the miller's fawnin';
"You can't winnow girl with chaff—
Sir! to you, good morning."

—U. N. NONE.

A long tramp—A 6 foot beggar.

Eternal vigilance enables a man to carry the same umbrella for years.

It is no sign that a hen meditates harm to her owner because she lays for him.

Even the moth has its sphere in society. He very frequently appears in a dress suit.

"I have been in a country," said a Nebraska preacher, "where the hand of man has never set a foot."

When you say to a man with a boil on his neck, "This is a beautiful morning and all nature seems to be smiling," you simply waste your breath.

We suppose that the only real pleasure that can be felt by the collector of antique furniture is to realize how uncomfortably somebody else used to live.

Base ball developes fleet running, but the circuit of the bases is never made with the speed shown by amateur players when the police drop on a Sunday game.

He: "Somehow or other I don't think I'd care to be the prettiest girl in the world," he remarked." She: "Why not?" He: "Because I'd rather be next to the prettiest."

Dr. Hammond's latest terror as a man killer is ice water. The doctor's testimony is a big thing on ice, but people will probably keep right on using ice water till they die, and some folks would like to use it even longer.

Doctor: "Your blood is deficient in quality, Mr. Jones. What you need is more iron in the system." Mr. Jones: "That can't be, doctor. I have stepped on at least 22 tacks with my bare feet since house-cleaning began."

"Do you like the Greek poets?" asked Miss Theodosia Thuddington, of Brown, who is not at all "literary." "Yes; better than any of the modern poets." "For what reason?" "Principally because they are all dead."

Little Roger: "Uncle John, I heard papa say you got pretty well soaked last night. Did it rain very hard?" Uncle John, with a sickly smile: "I don't exactly remember, Rodger; I know I was dry enough early in the evening."

"Mabel," said the young man, in deep, desperate tones, "I love you!" "Yes," "Tell me, do you think you could ever learn to love me?" "I don't know. If you'd send Charley Simpkins round to give me lessons, I might try."

A man with an office in the Jones' block dodged out and left a sign on the door reading: "Gone out—back in 5 minutes." When he returned he found the following request written below: "If you do, please wait, as I have a bill a year old against you."

Mamma, to Edie, aged 4 years, just home from her first morning at the kindergarten: "Well, Edie, how did you like it?" Edie: "I didn't like it a bit. The teacher put me on a chair, and told me to sit there for the present. And I sat and sat, and she never gave me the present."

"That settles it," said a prisoner whom his Honor sentenced to the workhouse for 30 days the other morning. "Settles what?" asked the officer to whom the remark was addressed. "I have been troubled in my mind whether to go to Long Branch or Niagara this summer, but now I won't have to go to either."

Carboy: "Mr. Pipes, I believe there is gas escaping in my house. What shall I do to prove it?" Pipes, the plumber. "Why don't you take a match and test the joints?" Carboy, in alarm: "But it might explode and blow me up!" Pipes, coolly: "Well, you wouldn't want any better proof than that, would you?"

A naughty little boy one day eluded punishment by creeping under a table, where his mother could not reach him. Shortly after his father came in, and when told the state of affairs crawled on his hands and knees in search of his son and heir, when to his astonishment he was greeted with this inquiry: "Is she after you, too, father?"

It was Brown's wedding-day, and he was teasing his boy brother-in-law. "Well, Johnny," he said, "I'm going to take your sister away, and have her all to myself, and you won't see her any more." "No, really—are you?" the boy said, curiously. "Yes, I am. What do you think of it?" "Nothing. I fancy I can stand it if you can."

"I can give you gas if you are afraid the pain will be too great to endure," said a dentist to an elderly colored woman, who had come to him to have several teeth extracted. "No, sah—no, sah!" she said, shaking her head emphatically; "you don't gib me no gas on hab me git up out'n dat cheer en walk home dead: No, sah—I reads de newspapahs!"

A young doctor, wishing to make a good impression upon a German farmer, mentioned the fact that he had received a double education, as it were. He had studied homœopathy and was also a graduate of a "regular" medical school. "Oh, dot vas noding," said the farmer; "I had vonce a calf vot sucked two cows, and he made noding but a comm on schteer after all."

THE BEARD.

In the days of Henry VIII., when the good Sir Thomas More was brought to the block, he lifted up his beard and permitted it to fall on the farther side of the block, saying, in his own quiet way—

"My beard at least has not committed treason, and it would be an injustice to make it suffer."

When Louis XIII. ascended the throne, and was without a beard, all the courtiers, except Sully, shaved their chins; and that wise man, with his long beard, appeared at Court, the shavelings laughed at his singular appearance, which ridicule drew from the minister the remark—

"Sire, when your father did me the honor to consult me on his great and important affairs, the first thing he did was to send away all the buffoons of the Court."

When, in Spain, Philip V., succeeding to the throne, began to reign with a shaven chin, the fashion was imitated by all classes, but with great reluctance and sorrow; "for," said they, "since we have lost our beards, we have lost our souls!"

So we see that hair, and the manner of wearing it, have always been a matter of dispute.

The Church, at times, loudly denounced flowing locks and flowing beard as "bundles of vanity," and though it sometimes happened that a temporary arrangement was effected, the old fashion came back again and again, and the gallants of the age, on the Rialto in Paris, or on the grand square in Rome or Madrid, still sported their flaunty locks and perfumed beard.

The barber in those days, as we can imagine, held no small place in the public estimation; he was considered as a man of science and philosophy.

Then there was the cheap barber of the past, with his pots, his jack towel, his small looking glass, his copy of the weekly papers, pictures, birds, and the endless flow of small talk. Talk! all barbers are said to have an endless ability in that way!

What wonder that the story of Bluebeard has interested thousands, or that the history of kings and queens, and hard fought battles, thrones set up and empires thrown down, the Saxon band who so held out against the Normans, and wept in the streets of London over William Longbeard, the wonderful lamp, Sinbad, the genii bottled up, and palaces springing out of the ground, flowing robes and turbaned heads, the barber and his seven brothers, the endless prattling barber, should be associated in our heads with flowing locks and lengthy beards, and that we should come at length to think that there was more reality about them than we dreamed of?

It is said that the strongest minds have weakest spots, but in this we must agree, that all men are weak on this one point, their beards, and the good looks they bring.

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CHESTNUT ST.,
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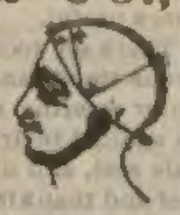
IN HAIR.



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No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.	

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also **Dollard's Regenerative Cream**, to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov. 29, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, or Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best Wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

I have used constantly for more than twenty-five years, "Dollard's Herbanium," for removing dandruff and dressing my hair, also for the relief of nervous headaches. I have found it a delightful article for the toilet, and cheerfully testify to the virtues claimed for it. I would not be without it.

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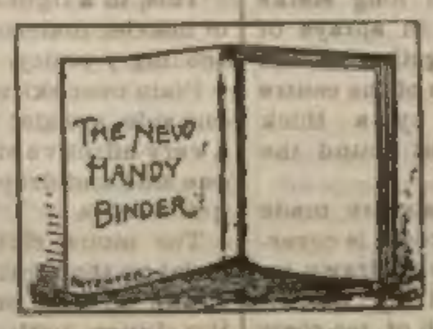
"The Handy Binder."



Very nearly, if not quite all of our readers, would like to preserve their copies of THE POST if it could be done easily, neatly and effectively. Its size makes it specially adapted for convenient and material binding, so that by the proper means, it can be made a neat volume for future reference or preservation, and at the same time an attractive and pretty ornament for the centre table. This means of binding THE POST proposes to furnish in offering to its subscribers one of the "NEW HANDY BINDERS," now so popular, and which are unquestionably the most perfect and handsome articles of the kind ever produced.

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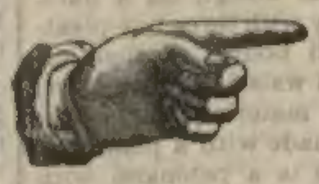

TO PLAY MUSIC
WITHOUT STUDY!
This Can Be Done by Means of the
INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the bass and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords in accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between a ♯ or ♭, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The latest novelties in summer chapeaux offer very little ground for adverse criticism; they are pretty and becoming in shape, sufficiently fanciful to save them from the pitfall of *banalite* on the one side and reasonable enough to ensure the approbation of sensible people on the other.

As to the floral ornaments with which they are trimmed, nothing can exceed their beauty and delicacy; flowers of the most varied description, and of the smallest and most fragile kind in some instances, are imitated with a refinement and truth to nature that are perfectly marvellous.

Bunches of violets and of mimosa are still much worn; but are gradually giving place to flowers of a later season; gardenias and other hot-house flowers are in favor, but not more so than roses of all kinds, and many varieties of wild and cultivated blossoms.

In nearly all the models having an advancing open brim in front, a wreath or spray of flowers, or else a folded strap and bow of ribbon crosses the front of the head under the brim.

The flowers on the outside are arranged in various ways, depending on the shape of the brim of the hat, the crown being in all cases low.

A large bouquet in front either stands alone, or it may terminate in long stalks laid across the crown ending in sprays of different lengths falling together at the back; or, again, the two sides of the centre bunch may be connected by a thick wreath of foliage passed right round the crown.

Very pretty and ladylike hats are made of black lace and tulle; the crown is covered with lace, the brim is of tulle drawn up in very small puffs divided by narrow black and gold galon; a bunch of tea-roses and foliage mingled with pleatings of lace forms the trimming on one side.

Another charming model is in fine black chip, with a band and bow of pale-blue ribbon resting on the hair under the brim, another bow on the top of the very low crown, and a wreath of ivy starting from the front and falling on each side of the crown and over the brim at the back; small pink flowers are mixed with the ivy leaves in front.

One other model, for country wear, has the sloping crown and brim covered with very finely goffered black lace flounces.

On the top, near the back, loops of narrow black velvet are mingled with lace, and ends of both are brought together in the form of strings to the front and fastened under the chin.

In front, on the brim, is a large bunch of daisies, cornflowers, small poppies, forget-me-nots, dandelions, and other wild flowers, all most delicately made in small sizes, tied together, and put on in careless fashion with all the stalks showing.

Capotes are made as small as possible; the newest are in gold straw with a brim or bandeau of fancy straw.

Sometimes a wreath of minute flowers is added at the extreme edge of the brim, and a pretty bunch of flowers is placed in front.

A lace flounce falling from the edge of the brim of the hat, or drawn in round the crown and covering the brim before falling from it, is taking the place of the inconvenient Empire veil; these flounces are of different depths.

Empire styles, or those that are analogous to them, may still be traced in the short waists and draped sashes that characterize many of the newest dresses.

The sashes are often pointed in front, after the fashion of a Swiss belt, but lie in easy folds, as if they were carelessly folded around the figure. Very original effects are sometimes produced with these draperies.

The dress is made of very supple serpent-green peau de soie; the draped skirt opens on the left side over a panel of gold embroidery on bleu de France silk, and thick gold cord, tied in a series of loose knots, crosses the front of the skirt and the panel from the right hip.

The upper part of the bodice, which is fastened under the left arm, is of gold embroidery on blue silk; the lower part, slightly pointed, is of peau de soie.

The two draperies start from the right side, the upper one is drawn up with pleats and fastened on the left side of the chest under a gold rosette; the lower one, coming from the side seam, forms a kind of wide band pleated up and fastened at the waist on the left side. The full sleeve is mounted on an embroidered band matching the collar.

A great many light, loosely-woven woollens will be worn this summer. Some of these resemble the voiles, crepes and other fabrics with which past seasons have made us familiar.

The chief novelty is figured barege, very much like the barege shawls of long ago, but in colors and patterns more in accordance with modern taste.

The material is charming in gray with a satiny border of stripes in shades of old rose; and a very pretty toilette for a young lady is made entirely of plain nettle-green barege.

The skirt is in accordion pleats, and is perfectly plain all round, and mounted on a silk under-skirt bordered with thick ruches.

The bodice is draped from the shoulders over a full chemisette of green surah, trimmed with gold braid.

A jacket of green cloth to match the dress, and a toque of surah, trimmed with a group of shaded pompons, accompany the costume.

Dresses of plain, soft woollens are frequently trimmed with moire ribbon, which has an admirable effect on the dull ground.

In a Directoire or redingote costume the pleated under-skirt or tablier is striped with five rows of ribbon reaching to the knees, and the pleated plastron to correspond is crossed with three rows of ribbon on the chest.

This, in a light shade under a redingote of heavier material in a darker color, is exceedingly pretty.

Plain over-skirts, caught up a little on one side, are also trimmed in this manner; a very effective style of skirt is open on one side and draped front and back in coquille folds.

The moire ribbon, bordering the material on the right side close to the edge, shows on the outer part of each fold, the inner part being lined with soft silk.

Sometimes the coquille folds end a little below the knees, and the moire trimming is continued by long loops of the ribbon falling from under the last fold.

The costume department in the shops are as enticing as ever with toilettes of every description for summer wear; some, composed of light airy fabrics deliciously cool, both in texture and appearance, and others in cotton materials, also cool, but of rather more substantial texture.

There are innumerable dresses in beige and summer serge, and besides these the more dressy costumes in foulard, broche and sicilienne.

The cotton dresses are mostly made in simple styles, a great advantage, seeing that they require to be washed frequently; and most of them are rendered still more attractive by the marvellously reasonable price at which they are offered.

A useful little dress is a fine *percale*, having a small white design on a dark ground, made simply with three box-pleated flounces, and full bodice finished off with collar, cuffs and waistband of velvet; another in the same material, of slightly different design, is made with a plain under-skirt, over which is a polonaise with long elegant drapery and becoming corsage trimmed with embroidery; and there are dresses in bordered *percale* of very superior quality, made in an exceedingly becoming Directoire style.

Many striking costumes are composed of fine soft cretonne in plain colors, trimmed with plaid to correspond.

One in pale gray has a plain under-skirt, bordered with eight or ten rows of fine tucks; the drapery, which is fully pleated, reaches to the edge of the tucks in front, is pulled up on either side, and falls again in long full pleats at the back; the band bodice is edged below the waist with a box-pleated flounce about 4 inches deep; the front is trimmed with a full plastron of plaid; the cuffs and broad turned-down collar are also of the plaid.

This model is also made of cretonne in all the fashionable colors, and in woollen material.

Odds and Ends.

OF HOUSE FURNISHING.

In a certain way all house-furnishing corresponds to the nest-building of the birds. It is the preparation of our home.

Sometimes the work requires no small ingenuity; then we deserve to share the triumph of those feathered nest-builders who do wonders with the most simple materials.

Utility and beauty are to be as guiding-lines in arranging our plan. Let it be remembered that we are not contriving a furniture mart, nor a bric-a-brac shop, nor even a palace on view, but a house to be lived in, every room and every part of which is to be made enjoyable.

It is greatly a matter of common-sense and good taste; these produce better results than the cheque-book and the complete house-furnisher.

The moneyed system results in a mansion complete from a grand piano down to a cat and duster.

The system of contrivance boasts having secured all one likes best and all in good taste. The planners and contrivers are the true nest-builders.

In house-furnishing, it is well that old times are changed and manners gone. One has to go back a long way to find beauty and utility combined in ordinary rooms.

Very far back, the rich had their baronial halls, carved oak and stained glass; but if we come down to recent times and to the bulk of the people, the idea of beauty in the house was either false or unthought of.

Who does not remember prim old-fashioned households, where the notion prevailed—and alas! perhaps prevails still—that the best room was a sacred apartment only to be opened for visits and on Sundays?

In that prehistoric period, the genteel drawing-room was a chamber of horrors. On the threshold, one was met by an odor of carpet and cold chimney, and a mouldy suggestion of dead roses in a jar.

Windows glared through white curtains that could have stood manfully by themselves—stiff enough to cut the children's fingers with their edges. A centre table occupied the best bit of the floor.

A sort of Druidic circle of books lay upon it, displayed for the sake of their covers, and piled at equal distances; and the covers might as well have been there without the leaves for any use that was ever made of them.

In the middle of this charmed circle of books not to be read, stood an object dreaded by the household and avoided as a danger—only some fruit, shocking to the appetite, covered by a glass shade, supposed to be of fabulous value and anxious to crack.

The chief ornaments of the room were likewise dangerous and to be shunned. The only flowers were of wax, paper, or—spare us, O memory!—feathers with quills in them.

Well, we have changed all that; but some modern drawing-rooms are hardly more useful.

There are rooms so crowded with treacherous stands and brittle trifles, that ladies enter steering nervously; and men lured in against their will are surprised to find a safe seat, and dispose of their legs with relief and thankfulness.

A man prefers a broad floor, a sense of space, seats varied, restful and strong, his favorite pictures, some of his favorite books, some attention to his favorite ideas of art and beauty.

Besides this, he has a certain mysterious pleasure in seeing feminine taste excel his expectations. He is proud of the vision of the artistic effect which women create as by magic out of simple things.

Taste can buy beauty in these days for almost a song. The well-chosen coloring of paper and paint-work are half the battle won; the margin of polished floor or of crisp cool matting is a great advantage.

The old plain hall and dull staircase have now given place to a pictured hall, even in very simple houses, luxurious curtains for the doors in winter, stairs before all things bright and gay with artistic color, landings ornamented with glowing jars, green plants, tinted windows.

The use of color has indeed wonderfully developed in the last few years. People who know its value, design their rooms in contrasts or in harmonies.

One of the leading artists delights in painting incidents set in a drawing-room background of yellow and cream and golden brown. Even up in the sleeping-rooms we may take a hint from this fancy for color.

The blue room and the pink room have still a country-house sound charming to modern ears; but in these days the new varieties of old colors are enchanting.

The knack of enlarging small bedrooms has also been discovered. A large plate of looking-glass is let unframed into one of the light-papered walls, to reflect the room and to serve better than the common bulky mirror. Then the furniture is enamelled ivory white; for it may be noted here that the effect of white is always to enlarge.

The ornamentation of a room must be guided by taste, and so abundant as to remove all sense of a plain or dismal look.

Confidential Correspondents.

C. J. A.—"Call us not weeds, we are flowers of the sea," was written by Eliza Cook, and will be found in her poems.

M. F.—The announcement of what we call "Banns of Marriage" dates back to the times of the Primitive Christian Church; for this we have the authority of Tertullian.

APPEAL.—Justices of the peace, like judges of courts of record, have control of their courts and can exclude the public if in their opinion the ends of justice or decorum would be subserved by so doing.

HOUSEKEEPER.—If you obtain some hay, sprinkle it with chloride of lime, and leave it in the room where the smell of paint is bad, and place a few basins of water there, the smell will be gone in a few hours.

FOUR.—Fifteen chemical elements enter into the composition of the human body: Oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus, calcium, magnesium, sodium, potassium, chlorine, fluorine, silicon, iron and manganese.

Q. Z.—We may some time in the near future give some hints as to judging of character by the ears. Generally speaking large ones are supposed to indicate good nature, and lack of over-brilliant qualities, while small ones are the reverse.

JANET.—As a remedy for red hands, put oatmeal or bran in the water in which you wash them. You might also apply a little glycerine at night, rubbing it well in, and then wearing a loose pair of old kid gloves during the night. The gloves should have a slit or hole cut in the palms to prevent any stoppage of the circulation which might otherwise ensue from the pressure.

LOGRHAVEN.—To ourselves personally, the value of such aids to memory seems to consist in your having enough memory to remember them. But we may be mistaken. Lack of attention and interest in your surroundings is a fruitful source of bad memories. This should be checked, and an alert, quick, bright manner acquired. These and thoughtfulness, and unselfishness for others, are great aids to a good memory.

J. T. P.—A girl of twenty-two who has not received an offer of marriage has not any reason, because of that, to fear she will be an old maid. Rest assured that "love will find the way," for there never was a Jack without a Jill. Do not worry about getting married; but try to prepare yourself to be a good wife to one who will ask you to wed. Work is the best panacea for any trouble, especially such an imaginary one as yours.

ANTIQUARY.—Make a solution of cyanide of potassium, half an ounce, to a wineglassful of water, and immerse the old sword or dagger in it for a few minutes. Then take it out and clean it with a paste composed of cyanide of potassium, Castile soap, whiting and water, mixed to the consistency of thick cream. This will remove the rust effectually. To prevent any return of rust, brush the articles over with fine white varnish.

GRIMIN.—Church ales, also known as Holy or Whitsun ales, were merry meetings held in mediæval England, generally at Whitsun-tide and under shadow of the church, for the purpose of raising church funds. Some weeks prior to the festival the church wardens brewed a large quantity of ale. On the appointed day all the people of the neighborhood gathered together. The village squire and his lady, sometimes accompanied by their jester, took part in the proceedings. Bull-baiting, bear-baiting, morris dancing, games and pongs were indulged in.

"BOODLE."—The term "boodle" always means money, but money is not always "boodle." Money honestly received and spent, money that circulates in regular and honest channels, that appears in cash-book and ledger and expense account, is never "boodle;" but, when a sum—a thousand dollars—is given to some one to use in influencing some third party, given in silence, and without requiring a receipt, that is "boodle." "Boodle" is money used for purposes of bribery and corruption; and the same word is used to indicate the money that comes as spoils—the result of some secret deal, the profits of which are silently divided.

STAMP-ACT.—The cost of the Revolutionary War was a little more than $100,000,000, while the Civil War cost about $4,000,000,000. The national debt at the close of the Rebellion was nearly $3,000,000,000. Although the Rebellion cost nearly forty times as much as the Revolution, yet the country, financially, was in a worse condition at the close of the Revolution than at the close of the Rebellion. Then the country had few resources and a small population. The national government had no authority to collect taxes or raise money in any way, and it had no credit, either at home or abroad. On the other hand, at the close of the Rebellion the country had a large population, inexhaustible resources, and the government had unlimited credit.

DORA.—We can only give you the dictionary meanings. "Atheism," from the Greek "A," without; "Theos," God. It was professed by Epicurus, Lucretius, and others. Spinoza was the defender of a similar doctrine, 1677. Atheism was the ruling doctrine of the French Republic, 1794 till 1801. Lord Bacon says, "Though a small draught of philosophy may lead a man into atheism, a deep draught will certainly bring him back to the belief of a God. Of "Secularism," the central idea is free-thought. It is not especially directed against Christianity, but independent of it. Its standard is utilitarian. It is the religion of the present life only, teaching men to seek happiness in duty and morality in nature.

REMUS.—That portion of North America included between the 40th and 50th parallels is not so warm as that portion included between the same parallels in Europe, especially near the Atlantic coast. In the interior of the country there is not so much difference. This difference is owing, principally, to three causes: First, the warm waters of the Gulf Stream wash the western shores of Europe, while a cold polar current flows along the eastern coast of North America; second, the mountain ranges in Europe trend east and west, thus protecting the country south of them from the cold winds of the polar regions, while the mountains in North America trend north and south, and furnish little protection; third, the warm winds from the Desert of Sahara blow over Southern Europe.